The June

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Contributions by

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Violet Loraine.

Lady Warwick.

N. Pemberton-Billing, M.P.

Col. F. N. Maude, C.B.

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Etc.

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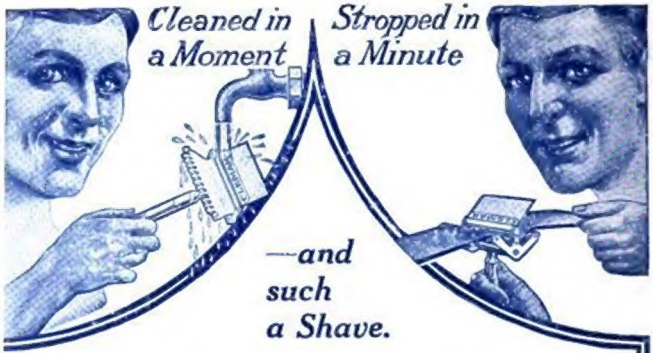

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Miss Rita Lawson is one of the many charming actresses who are appearing in revue She did great things in *Fads and Fancies* on tour.

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Miss Violet Loraine, whose clever performance added so much to the success of "The Bing Boys are Here" at the Alhambra.

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"Penny Plain—Twopence Coloured"

By Violet Loraine.

"I'd cheerfully stand on my head if I thought it would amuse people," says Miss Violet Loraine, the popular and clever young actress. It is this enthusiasm which has made her so successful in character parts, as the following article very clearly shows.

Photo Whitlock & Hayes.

Miss Loraine is a great believer in the value of laughter. Here she is seen as a Gymnasium Girl, with a smile that would cheer even the most morose.

"Make myself look a hideous sight? Make *myself* a scarecrow? Put on those ghastly clothes? My good man, not for you or any manager under the sun. I'm on the stage to look pretty, *I* am! I'm on the stage to cause a rush on the opera glass department, *I* am! How d'you expect me to 'get off' from the front if you turn me into a bird-scarer? My poor idiot, it can't be done! *Good* morning!"

The lady wore an expensive suit, a hat trimmed with paradise plumes, a face decorated with lumps of *crème* Simon, *poudre de riz*, and electric—very electric—lip salve. The lady was an actress—I should say a n'actress. "Twopence coloured" was her line apparently. And the "poor idiot"—otherwise "my good man"—was an agent.

I was waiting behind the door to skip into the holy of holies—in other words, the inner office—in the days when I pranced gaily in the chorus at 30s. a week. I stood, listening.

Didn't you know I'd been in the chorus? Good gracious me, of *course* I have—and I'm not sorry, either.

Where was I? Oh, yes—behind the door of the agent's room waiting to insert myself across the sacred threshold, when a chance telephone call sent him flying into the outer office. And that was why I happened to overhear the somewhat graphic monologue I've recorded above. Read it again if you've forgotten it. It begins: "Make myself look a hideous sight?"

Well, it appeared that the lady in the paradise plumes had been offered a character part—and then the band began to play! It

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played loud and long (see opening paragraph), and concluded with a whirlwind exit on the part of the insulted genius, an exit positively bristling with injured dignity. And I, behind the door, in a very mouldy coat and skirt—my bank balance was pretty slender in those days—found myself wanting to dash after the silly creature and shake her and say:

"Don't turn it down because it's a character part! Character parts are fine! Make yourself hideous—and glory in it! Laughter is the best thing in the world, and character players get laughs most of the time! Don't be a fool. Quit the 'twopence coloured' notion—'penny plain' is the winning line, if you only knew it!"

Phew! What a mouthful! That's what I *wanted* to do. What I *did* do was to slip into the inner apartment and confront an irate agent. Said he:

"Now then, my girl, what is it, what *is* it?"

Said I:

"I want another job, in the chorus—London or tour."

Said he:

"Come and see me tomorrow — busy now, busy now! Don't bang the door, dear. . . . Where's Miss ——?"

And I hadn't sufficient sense to demand the character part that the foolish, paradise-plumed female had scorned! I don't suppose I should have got it—things aren't given to happening that way in our profession, but it would have broken the ice at least.

As it was, I went on hankering to make myself into all sorts of oddities, to disguise myself, to become a fairly good specimen of "penny plain" instead of a mediocre version of "twopence coloured." But I was as foolish as most beginners, and so I continued to smirk and smile, and make myself look as decently be-oo-ti-ful as grease paint allowed, in order to fly round in the chorus.

The result was that I was just one of a multitude, cut to pattern, with no distinguishing feature. In the dressing-room I used to put on weird make-ups and act queer "stunts" for the girls and the dressers.

"Lor', miss, you *are* a one!" an ancient soul of this order informed me. "You ought to go on an' n'imitate that there George Robey, you ought! Quite a comic you are, to be sure!"

And the girls used to laugh and encourage me, but when I talked of trying to play character parts up went their hands and eyebrows in horror.

"Oh, Vi, you can't! You'll never 'get off' if you do—think of the stalls!"

That was their chief reason for preferring "twopence coloured" to "penny plain"—and it's a reason I've never been able to appreciate. After all, why shouldn't a woman make herself look odd occasionally? Simpering sameness is decidedly wearying, and, as I said before, a real good laugh is worth a whole beauty chorus, especially nowadays. I don't mind admitting that

Photo *Weather & Boys*

Hideous frocks and scragged-back hair may sometimes be Miss Lorraine's choice for character parts, but when she *does* wear a pretty costume no one could look more charming.

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I feel so strongly the value of laughter—and to-day that feeling is emphasised—that I'd cheerfully stand on my head if I thought it would amuse the people who so richly deserve amusing.

Why not? If I can give pleasure or laughter to a lot of folks by scragging back my hair, putting on a hideous dress, an appalling hat, and an idiotic expression, why I'll do it gladly any day! Besides, from a purely selfish point of view, there's so much more variety in character work than in just going on as oneself. An *ingénue* is always an *ingénue*—sweetly smiling, the usual insipid, dental grin, and being made love to by the same old leading juvenile—(sorry!).

At one time I began to despair! It seemed that I was doomed to appear in ordinary, straight parts! Principal boys in pantomime, too, were my lot; and, honestly, I should have revelled to my heart's content in Mrs. Twankey or one of the ugly sisters in *Cinderella*. But, no! I was forcibly thrust before the footlights in the garb of the conventional principal boy or the everyday leading lady, and it nearly broke my heart.

The only thing that cheered me up at all was the fact—a record, I believe—that I was engaged to play principal boy at Drury Lane, when I was in Australia, by cable! The whole thing was fixed up just by ocean telegrams over all those thousands of miles—and back I came to appear as principal boy at the "Lane." My last appearance in that theatre, by the way, had been as a chorus girl in pantomime at 30s. a week, several years before; and when I was invited to return on that occasion my reply was: "If I come back—and I'd like to—it will be as principal boy, not as a chorus girl!" And my words came true, for I never entered Drury Lane from that hour until I returned to rehearse as principal boy!

Can you guess how glad I was to get back to character parts after an interval of ordinary work? One very odd thing happened to me at the Hippodrome when I was playing in "Fortifying a House" in *Business as Usual*. I looked really very plain in this part, and one night a very irate man came round to tell me that he intended to prosecute me for holding his wife up to ridicule! It appeared

Poole *Langfier.*

No more dashing principal boy could be imagined than Miss Loraine, who is a great favourite with all pantomime-goers.

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Miss Lorraine's burlesque of a comedienne in *Push and Go* was one of the gems of the performance, while——

part in *Sergeant Brue*, and oh! how I revelled in it.

When I was a small girl I was constantly in hot water because I would dress up, generally in the most hideous clothes I could find. You will begin to grasp the fact that, to me, there is a certain loveliness in grotesque and burlesque qualities—if only because they are generally laughter-making.

Now at home we were visited once a week by a sewing lady, an extraordinary female, who "obliged" for a modest sum and her meals, and did much sewing in a few hours. She wore a vile bonnet, with quivering, moulting plumes, and a revolting dolman.

One day, I stole some hairpins, screwed up my hair, put on a long skirt of my mother's, then the dolman and the bonnet, and marched into the dining-room, where I proceeded to give *my* idea of our sewing lady! The good soul happened to overhear, and, having

that I exactly resembled her in appearance and voice, so much so, that several friends had pointed it out to them, and they came to see for themselves. He took a lot of persuading, but at last retired, satisfied that I did *not* know his wife, and had not intentionally mimicked her in any way.

Now, I consider I've been lucky in my "penny plain" work, because I've struck such a varied heap of characters. After some chorus practice I finally took the fatal plunge and burst into a character part. My first effort in this line was the servant's

Photo Walker & Boys.

——she was equally amusing when she appeared in *Business As Usual*.

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no sense of humour—or any other kind of sense—instantly indulged in hysterics. Bed was *my* address for the next twenty-four hours!

When I went to the London Hippodrome, to take up Miss Ethel Levey's *rôle* in *Hullo, Tango!* I was delighted at the chance of playing some burlesque parts. When *Business as Usual* came along, I was lucky enough to have a real character duet with Mr. Ambrose Thorne, called "We've Been Married Just One Year."

I made myself into a violently exaggerated type of American globe-trotter. My hat, my suit, even my handbag, were as hard as hard could be, and my hair was plastered back under a very "sensible" hat. Of course, the whole thing was hugely overdone, but then burlesque must always be an exaggeration if it is to be effective.

In order to get a realistic costume for her coster song, "Dear Old Saturday Night," Miss Loraine went exploring in the East-End. Here is the result, and——

Photos Weather & Boys.

——here is the disguise she assumed when appearing with Harry Tate in "Fortifying a House."

In this case I exaggerated to such good purpose that when some friends of mine said to somebody one night: "How did you like Violet Loraine?" the answer was: "Oh, she was all right. But, I say"—this with great eagerness—"who was that awful American woman in the duet? She was fine!"

In this revue I had another lovely (!) part, with Harry Tate, in "Fortifying a House." For really hideous make-up, I think my appearance in this thing was fairly near the top-notch, run pretty close by the respectable housekeeper in *Push and Go*, who forced her way into the Revue Manager's office, and said to Harold:

"You little devil, I'll be the ruin of you yet!"

The hat I wore in that scene was really a treasure—it cost about sixpence originally; then I had it rolled under a lawn-roller, dropped in the bath, stamped on, and finally wore it during the entire run of *Push and Go*. I thought of sending it to the British Museum, but it dropped to pieces when I tried to put it in the pantechnicon.

My coster character in *Push and Go* was another great joy, with the song "Dear

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Miss Loraine never did anything better than the impersonation of an American globe-trotter in a character duet with Mr. Ambrose Thorne.

Old Saturday Night." Determined to get a really typical make-up for this part, I went down to the East End one day and watched the girls at a big market. At last I struck just the type I was looking for—a married lady with a large family, a string bag, and a husband!

For a long time I tracked her, but couldn't see her blouse, as she had it covered by a shawl. At length they all repaired to an eating-house, and, nothing daunted, I followed them in. There I managed to get a table facing my model, and the blouse I wore in *Push and Go* was the nearest approach I could get to her amazingly ugly garment.

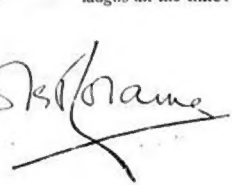
One night I was dressing for this song when a girl friend, who had not seen the revue, came into my room. She watched me put on the filthy skirt, the appalling blouse, the shawl, and the shoddy coster cap in open-mouthed wonder. But when I stuck my side hair into iron curling-pins, she found her voice.

"Vi!" she gasped. "You—you—you're *not* going on the stage with those things!"

I said "Of course I am"—and on I went. When I came back, she was in tears.

"How could you?" she wailed. "Why, I thought all actresses were beautiful!"

An apostle of the "twopence coloured" creed, wasn't she? Well, "penny plain" for me—and lots of laughs all the time!



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THE GREEN ARMLETEER

By Christine Jope-Slade.

"For she was beautiful; her beauty made
The bright world dim, and everything beside
Seemed like the fleeting image of a shade."

I.

"Don't be a fool, Adrian!" said the ashen, pinched-up young man in the narrow bed. "Don't be a fool! I won't look on the bright side of things! I wish to Heaven they'd potted me properly!"

"But you will be able to paint some day soon, old comrade."

"Don't 'old comrade' me, for goodness' sake, man! I'm not an artist now; I'm just another wreck from this ghastly business, and in a week or so I'm to be turned out to recover my health—my constitution undermined and my brain full of pictorial hideousness."

The shabby old man beside the bed shook his head sorrowfully.

War re-created men.

This peevish, bitter, hard-swearing, terrible-looking young savage had been a gentle, dreamy, happy idealist a year ago.

The bandaged hand on the red eiderdown had created the very breath and living texture of flowers, and acclaimed him one of the greatest painters of flowers Europe had ever seen.

"Go into the country," the old man said. "It is not as if you were poor. Take a house with a garden; study with your whole heart and soul. Get the very essence of the flowers, pore over them at all hours and in all lights, be alone with them, steep yourself in them."

His eyes glowed.

"Take a fruit and flower farm, and market the produce. It would be a hobby and an occupation. You have uncanny knowledge of plant life—turn it to account. Enrich your whole nature during this enforced period of recuperation. You can turn it to tremendous account."

"Stuff!" burst out the man in the narrow bed, so loudly that the boy next to him turned startled, pain-weary eyes and stared.

A bell rang; a sister in pink appeared at the door; a girl in grey with a face of hopeless tragedy came from behind the screens round one of the beds; the sister moved swiftly towards her. Farewells were being said at other bedsides; little tables were full of floral offerings—a crimson heap of roses, glowing warmly, a bunch of purple heliotrope, a handful of cottage pansies.

"It was good of you to come. I'm a surly brute," apologised the artist. "I'm curiously lonely—devil a relative of my own—and all the boys of the old days at the Front."

"I'll come again," promised the weather-beaten old artist.

"Oh, I'm up to-morrow, but I think I shall take your advice and rusticate. Come and see me then."

"Sure, and good luck."

He was the last to leave the ward. Simultaneously with the closing of the door upon him, the door at the other end of the ward opened to admit six ward sisters armed with basins and towels.

When it came to his turn, the artist raised the arm the sister was washing and looked at it curiously.

It was like a bleached stick.

"Good Heavens!" he said huskily; "that's me!"

II.

The sunshine came through the diamond-paned window to lie on the polished floor in little checked mats of gold; the white dimity curtains fluttered like impatient wings, and Earle Watson sat in his invalid chair and read the *Morning Post*.

There were bobbing shadows on the checked gold mats swaying and nodding, but by and bye a large, round, pudding-shaped shadow drifted across. Earle, staring down, saw and called without looking up:

"Snuggs!"

An ancient brown face framed in wispy, white hair looked in respectfully at the open window.

"Sir?"

"Snuggs, what the blazes are we to do? Every man in the village gone! I assure you, Snuggs, when I thought out this fool scheme and took the place, it never occurred to me that I couldn't get some sort of labour."

He lifted his fretful, pain-lined, white face to the ancient one.

"You ain't had no answer to your ad. for women gardeners?"

"Yes, one: she's coming to see me at ten. But—hang it all, Snuggs, I hate the thought of engaging women! This green armlet, patriotic idea is all very well, but it's silly from a common-sense point of view. Women are the weaker sex; they weren't meant to do heavy work."

"Some of 'em's pretty hefty," suggested Snuggs. "I'm all ag'in women pokin' their noses in anywhere myself, but if you can't get men, what *are* you to do?"

Earle made a fretful gesture of distaste. He was feeling hideously weak and jumpy that morning, and the nerves in his wrists and ankles and the nape of his neck revolted quiveringly at the strain of life. He wondered wretchedly why he had taken this delicious little furnished house, whose architecture and furnishing and well-beloved garden had been at first a restful, peace-giving joy to him.

"I loathe the thought of having a woman about the place, seeing her dig and hoe and shove things about. I hate to see women on tram-cars, I loathe and detest to see them in khaki, and as for this green armlet idea, I think it is idiocy."

"The young woman gardener, sir," said Mrs. Snuggs, who "did" for him. Snuggs shuffled hastily away, and Earle Watson lifted an uncomfortable, slightly flushed face.

"Show her in," he said.

She came at once—part of the sunlight, the early hour, the fresh joyousness of the spring day—strong, deep-breasted and warm-coloured, a young Juno, a long-limbed, fleet Diana.

Her grey eyes, clear and wide and sexless, regarded him impersonally.

She stood straight and supple, in her brown tweeds and brogues, waiting for him to speak, and under her severe brown suède hat her thick, coarse hair waved sunnily.

"You wished to—to—garden?" he said stupidly, and sat very white and pitiful adoring her radiant health and vitality.

"I saw your advertisement in the local paper, and I answered it. I was one year on a violet farm. I am quite competent. I have done an enormous amount of gardening, and I am fond of it. I think I should meet your requirements."

She flashed a little smile that had absolutely nothing in it but youthful confidence.

"You see," he explained, "I'm an artist—an artist who paints only flowers. Perhaps you know my name—Earle Watson?"

She shook her head brightly.

"At the present moment I am knocked out, but I wanted to continue my work, make experiments in colour, in the grouping of flowers. I thought I would run a little market-garden, and make that pay for my experiments. I know two Covent Garden fellows who would take any amount of stuff. I—I'm afraid it isn't very practical."

He looked at her.

"I don't see why not—in a small way," she observed quietly. "Of course, one would need boys to help one pack, but there are two or three who would be all right with strict supervision."

"Then you live here?"

"I used to," was her tranquil answer.

"Do you think you could undertake it?" he asked anxiously.

"I think so. I can bring references and my violet farm certificate."

"I don't think that is necessary. Er—does £2 2s. a week suit you—your idea of remunetation?"

"Isn't it rather much?"

"I think not; the work is hard and a specialist's. I suppose your home is near here?"

"My mother and I are living in rooms."

"There is a little cottage near the orchard, quite nicely furnished, very wee—if you would not be nervous, perhaps you and your mother might find it more convenient than rooms."

"It would suit us excellently. You are very good."

It was like a boy repeating a grown-up phrase.

They talked business and gardening for a few minutes. Then he said, with a little sigh of relief and weariness:

"Well, that's settled."

Her eyes were on the garden, on the lawn where the crocuses clustered in bunches like carelessly thrown amethysts.

"Do you know the people who own this? I took it direct from an agent, and the man Snuggs and his wife, though they worked for them, are mum as mice on the subject."

She stood straight and supple, in her brown tweeds and brogues, waiting for him to speak, and under her severe brown suede hat her thick, coarse hair waved sunnily.

"I believe it belongs to a widow."

"They must have loved their garden."

"I believe they did. They lost a lot of money, and had to let. Have you any objection to my starting work this morning? That japonica wants tying back badly."

"Certainly," he agreed.

They made a few more arrangements for the future.

It was like doing business with a bird or a star; he had the same extraordinary feeling of sexlessness and bright impersonality with this girl, but, oh! he revelled in the length and breadth and strength and health of her!

He watched her cross the lawn.

She stopped and chatted a minute with old Snuggs, giving him the same white flash of teeth; then she disappeared.

She reappeared with scissors, twine, nails, and a brown leather apron.

Earle Watson drew back the fluttering curtain to watch her work. She worked deftly, swiftly, tirelessly.

He tried to think of her in connection with any little feminine weaknesses, foibles, fancies. It was as absurd, as ludicrous as a ballroom moonlight conversation carried on at eleven in a butcher's shop in bright sunlight.

He fell asleep watching her, absorbing

hungrily the sunshine and the picture of young goddess strength.

III.

Her name was Joan, Joan Arthur, and she created order from chaos, servile civility from Snuggs, and beauty from the barren earth, and she remained cheerily unapproachable, impersonal, and magnificent.

When the apple blossom foamed rosily, Earle sometimes met a small, subdued woman in black walking by the orchard. He raised his hat. She bowed. He knew her for a little gentlewoman and the mother of his gardener —and that was all he knew of her.

Joan produced village boys, and managed them. Daily crates of exquisitely scented violets, starry-eyed narcissi, and flaunting daffodils travelled to town. She was up at five every morning—he fancied the dew and the glow of sleep still mantled her. At half-past six she disappeared utterly.

He walked painfully and with a stick at first, and finally six feet of triumphant uprightness with the slight limp that he would always have.

He waited, thirsted for her word of approval.

"It's ripping to be walking again, isn't it?" she said brightly, like an intelligent boy. "I'm so glad."

He asked her if she was doing her work in the spirit of the green armleteer, and found the peculiar crystal quality of her gaze embarrassing.

"What is a green armleteer?"

"Well, I suppose it's the same idea as the khaki armleteer—women who are doing agricultural work for the country's sake."

"Oh, but I'm not," she said bluntly.

He prayed for some little feminine inconsistency in her, something that should detract from the shining, calm efficiency of her, some tiny crack in the impenetrable armour of her sexless perfection, but he found none.

He began to use his brush again—on a clump of midnight primroses, mystic in the moonlight, on a *gloire de Dieu* tea-rose, glowing with sunlight.

He showed them to his goddess.

"They're exquisite," she exclaimed unexpectedly, and then, while his pulses bounded, stilled them with that curious choir-boy quality of hers

"It must be top-hole to paint."

He left her to plant chrysanthemums, and went away to curse the futility of trying to stir or interest her as one might a normal woman.

He told himself that she was not normal. Normal women had discontents, moods, peevishness, little coquetries; they laughed, they cried, they were deliciously sad or glad, bored or absorbed.

He exulted in her. He worshipped her. He loved her—and so he looked ceaselessly for some sign of human weakness in her, some yielding to femininity.

At times he felt uncomfortable beneath the cool serenity of her gaze, ashamed of his emotion as he had been before a schoolboy cousin he had taken to hear *Aida*.

They were sending crates of fruit to London now — luscious strawberries, currants like clusters of rubies, velvety cherries.

He sold his two pictures for £50 each, and worked at the study of an Alpine plant he had grown in the rockery. It was wonderful —like spilt wine.

At times she maddened him. Always she baffled him. He wanted to kiss her, swear at her, shake her, anything to break her cool tranquillity. He felt if once he could break it, or discover her with the mask off, he might have his chance.

As health came to him he no longer exulted in the sight of hers. It seemed natural, or an added perfection, like the dew on the perfect fruit.

He grew to hate the home, almost to hate the garden, almost to hate his green armleteer.

A fussy lady invaded his house one day, the first caller; she was giving a dance the following night for some officers who were billeted in the town. It was quite informal, and everyone was coming; wouldn't he?

He told her he was going to London to see his art agent.

He told Mr. and Mrs. Snuggs so.

He told his goddess so.

The Snuggses said might they go away for a day and a night to see some relations?

He gave them permission. He watched them depart.

He stayed in the deserted house.

He knew suddenly that he did not want to leave the Green Armleteer even for twenty-four hours, so he sat in the twilight in the panelled room and dreamt of her—and by and bye he fell asleep, with the perfume of roses in his nostrils and the song of the courting nightingale in his ears.

IV.

The room was silver and black when he awoke; somewhere beyond the garden a corncrake whizzed; the scent of stocks and mignonette seemed to breathe through the window with exquisite sweetness.

He had walked with his goddess in Elysian fields; he stepped back to reality slowly, and to the recognition of a new sound that he had never heard in the house before.

It came from the room on the top floor, the locked room containing all the owner's goods and chattels.

She held out a pink satin slipper to him like a furious child. "It's your beastly gardening!" she wailed. "I can't get into my frock, and my feet won't go into my shoes." [*Page 124, col. 1.*]

The house agent had asked him if he minded their retaining that, as it was inconvenient to store all the things, and he had acquiesced instantly.

There were burglars up there.

The noise of footsteps and boxes being dragged about could mean nothing else; somehow they had got to hear that the Snuggses were away for the night, and he was supposed to be in town.

His army pistol was in the drawer. He had no ammunition, but it might be useful. Slipping off his shoes, he opened the drawer and secured it; then he crept cautiously upstairs in his socks.

A light came from under the crack of the door and through the opening. He judged it to be a candle from the way it flickered.

Cautiously he inserted the pistol round the edge of the door, rapidly following it himself; then he stood speechless and amazed facing his gardener.

Clothes were all over the floor—a flouncy bunch of ribbon and lace, a blue silk stocking, a white satin petticoat trimmed with tiny rosebuds, a glittering scarf; articles of feminine attire he could as soon have associated with Mrs. Snuggs as with the Green Armleteer.

"You!" he gasped.

She wore a pink crêpe kimono with a broad pink sash, and there were roses in her carefully dressed hair, and tears on her mutinous face.

She held out a pink satin slipper to him like a furious child.

"It's your beastly gardening!" she wailed. "I can't get into my frock, and my feet won't go into my shoes, and, oh! I did want to go to the dance! I hate you and everyone!"

She collapsed on a trunk, and buried her face in her hands.

"Are—are these your things?"

"Whose else should they be?" she hurled at him furiously. "This is our house and our garden, and we've lived here all our lives, and the Smuggses are *our* servants ever since I've been a little girl. We couldn't bear to leave it and let you muck up our garden—and mother fretted—and we wanted money, and I was half-trained as a gardener—and—oh! I've spoilt my feet. They're horrid—and I used to have such pretty, pretty feet; and I've spoilt my figure and my hands. I did want to go to the dance! I never thought I couldn't get into these things."

He was enchanted, enraptured, breathless over his discovery of the woman in her, the natural, irresponsible, illogical, beloved female mind and soul.

"I've clean forgotten how to tango, and I've been dreaming of Bostoning all the week! Oh! it's rotten, rotten—and it's the first bit of fun I've had for years! Look at my feet and my hands. They're like a charwoman's—and—and they used to be so pretty!"

"And I thought you a green armleteer!" he rhapsodised.

"I don't know what you're talking about," she said pettishly. "I gardened because I jolly well had to have some money, and we were living rent free and keeping an eye on the place."

He sat down beside her on the trunk, and took her hands; never had she seemed so desirable as in this little hour of absurd femininity.

"Joan," he said, "I can't bear to see you cry, my dear."

The primitive assurance, the confidence of the male flowed richly and warmly in his veins.

She lifted her eyes as if she listened and heeded something afar off for the first time.

"Joan," he said, "I don't know whether you quite understand, dear; I worshipped you—and now I love you!"

He saw the wondering, young-maiden look in her wet eyes; he adored the tremulousness of her red mouth; her hand grew hot in his and gripped it.

The little pink-stockinged foot curled under her slid to the floor. She sat quite, quite still, her lips parted a little.

He thought that the young goddess took leave of her, and left the young woman to him; he sat still that the leave might be taken slowly and sacredly.

She turned wet, puzz'ed, wonderful eyes to him. Then she rose with a little sigh, and they faced each other.

"I must have felt like this for you a long time—only I didn't know. Oh, my dear, my dear, it's all so new and wonderful—and I am afraid."

As he took her in his arms and sought her mouth, he knew that his goddess had become a woman.

TOMMY'S LASS.

'Tain't so much the partin'
When the reg'ment's startin'
Sets you chokin' like a snivellin' pup;
Kissin' you can stand,
And the way she 'olds yer 'and—
'Tisn't that
It's somethin' in 'er *smile* as breaks you up.

'Tain't the rain a-droppin',
Ceaseless, without stoppin',
Gives a feller queer internal pains.
Though it's mighty dampin',
This French mud we're trampin'—
'Tisn't that—
It's thinkin' o' them muddy *English* lanes.

'Tain't the shells a-flyin'
Makes you scared o' dyin'—
Guess you ain't that crawlin' kind o' cur!—
'Tisn't that you're funkin'
Foreign soil to bunk in—
'Tisn't that—
It's lyin' there so long, so far from *'Er*.

Anne Page.

The LETTERS of a FLAPPER

This month we publish some more of the flapper's correspondence with her benevolent uncle, written during a period of banishment to a maiden aunt of old-fashioned tendencies. Even in the wilds of Much Hadley, April contrived to make things hum.—[Ed. R.M.]

UNCLE DARLING,

Why are uncles such lambs—I mean it in the endearing sense—and aunts so terrible?

You are the one support of my chequered life, and goodness knows how much of my wardrobe you were responsible for—I certainly shouldn't dare to tell you. And, not being married, you act entirely on instinct; you can't *know* how expensive life is for us little girls. But Aunt Emily ought to understand from practical experience, yet ah! how narrow are her views—as narrow as the skirts we used to wear, while yours are as broad as the present fashion.

Darling, I've been staying with Aunt Emily down among the hayseeds at Much Hadley. They seem to have christened the hamlet in derision; it ought to be called Not Much Hadley or Hardly Any Hadley, or something like that. Aunt Emily lives at the Manor House, and it turned me faint to have all my correspondence addressed "Miss April Vereker, *at* The Manor House, Much Hadley." Yet so it was.

Mother really engineered this piece of iniquity. She said I knew more soldiers than were good for me, and the country solitude would give me back that girlish simplicity I seemed to have lost. But, Uncle, it is not at all simple to have a good time with only about one man to the square acre instead of about nine to the square yard—my usual allowance in London. The country is the last place to be simple in.

Aunt Emily met me at the station, which is Ashby St. Valentine, three miles away. I shuddered when I saw the fat carriage horses and Aunt's toque and the wide sequin belt she wore. As luck would have it, she shuddered just as much at me.

"My dear April," she said icily, "I don't think your dress"—my *dress*, if you please—"is quite long enough, and those exceedingly thin silk stockings and ridiculous shoes look absurd in the country."

"But, Auntie," I explained, turning faint at the sight of the super-Dreadnoughts on her own feet, "this suit cost ten guineas at Philippe's and it's the very last word."

She pursed up her lips and sniffed. I am afraid no man will ever really love Aunt Emily.

Life becomes very corked, as Tony would say, when your hostess disapproves of all your things, and asks you to read *The District Visitor* to her after lunch. Consequently on the second day I wandered off through the grounds down to the high wall which surrounds the Manor House, climbed up and sat on the top. I hoped that in an hour or two a horse and cart or a peasant might go by. I pined, you understand, for a little excitement.

After about three hundred years a youth came ambling along. He was reading a book, which turned out to be "The Idylls of the King," by someone called Tennyson; he looked about seventeen, and his face glowed like a well-washed turnip, but he was all I had, so I dropped my little powder-puff box with the mirror in the lid, and asked him sweetly if he would mind picking it up.

When he saw me I almost forgave him. He took on that rapt expression of a lady

Aunt Emily met me at the station. . . . "My dear April," she said icily, "I don't think your dress" my *dress*, if you please "is quite long enough." [Page 125, col. 1 and 2.]

about to recite "The Wreck of the *Hesperus*" at a village concert, and started quoting most flattering poetry to me, something about "Oh, imperial moulded form, And beauty such as never woman wore." It made me feel rather stout, but I liked his enterprise.

I wandered . . . down to the high wall which surrounds the Manor House, climbed up and sat on the top. [Page 125, col. 2.]

"You may come and sit on the wall beside me if you are good," I said.

He was no athlete, but he climbed up somehow. I dragged at his collar a good deal to help. He told me his name was Aloysius. He said he would be my Sir Galahad, and I should be his Elaine. He said I was his ideal, and he would worship me from afar. I suppose it's the country air, uncle. I can understand it.

He was not forward. He jumped when he touched my hand by accident, and when I scrambled down from the wall, exhibiting a mere fraction of ankle, he blushed. He begged me to keep a tryst, as he called it, with him there the next day. I thought it might be one of their funny country animals, but it seems it meant an assignation, so I said I would. But I forgot about it because Tony came to call with his mother.

Tony is in the Scarlet Lancers, and Aunt Emily considers him a very worthy young fellow. So he was in her drawing-room, but I revived when he smuggled a tiny note into my hand, asking me to meet him outside the drive at 2.30 the next afternoon. I'd booked Aloysius for three, but I couldn't bother about him. The sight of a little khaki nearly broke me down. I know you will understand, uncle, dear.

Tony turned up with a motor-bike; there was a comfy cushion on the carrier, and little foot-rests stuck on to the frame for a

I simply had to let Tony kiss me. It was bad for him, of course, so soon, but I was starved . . . for a little petting.

passenger. So I got up behind, and we had the most gorgeous run. He gave me tea at a dear old hotel in Great Moocham, and as we had the enormous dining-room entirely to ourselves I simply had to let Tony kiss me. It was bad for him, of course, so soon, but I was starved, Uncle, starved for a little petting. Be sorry for me!

When we got back to the Manor House lodge gates, there was Aloysius, propped against the wall, reading "The Idylls of the King." We drew up practically alongside him. I was sitting astride the carrier because it's safer that way, and perhaps I did show a little stocking, but I had on rather a doggy tweed rig-out, and my brogues were some *you* gave me, and your very own bootmaker built them.

Little as you might imagine it, Aloysius put down "The Idylls," advanced, and began to make a scene.

"Sir," he said to Tony, "you are a scoundrel. Unhand this lady!"

He almost dragged me from the carrier. Tony propped up the bike and gazed at Aloysius, fascinated.

"What is it?" he asked me.

"Guard yourself," continued Aloysius. "I am about to strike you."

Tony shook his head.

"Do you think you can really *afford* a tombstone?" he asked gently. "In war-time, too?"

But Aloysius had struck Tony in the chest—such a bang. Tony gave a hollow groan. Then he seized Aloysius and dropped him gently into a neighbouring ditch.

"Meditate there," he advised. "Do nothing foolish. Remember fighting is my trade. I am accustomed to the sight of blood."

Well, of course, there was an awful row. Aloysius turns out to be a mother's darling, and Mrs. Aloysius is a great pal of Aunt Emily's. What with Aloysius' troubles and the story of my joy-ride getting about, Aunt sent me home. Father says he wishes it was still fashionable to beat erring daughters, and mother, with the refined cruelty of a woman, has divided my dress allowance by four. So, as you are my darlingest and only uncle, I just tell you for what it's worth that I'm awful hard up.

Au revoir, darling. I do *try* to be a good girl.

Your devoted

APRIL.

"Guard yourself," continued Aloysius. "I am about to strike you." Tony shook his head. "Do you think you can really *afford* a tombstone?" he asked gently.

SLIM COMES HOME

By Ray Sprigle.

"To rock the cradle of reposing age,
With lenient arts extend a mother's breath,
Make languor smile, and smooth the bed of death."

Slim Carper had avoided one great error usually made by his kind. He had abandoned entirely the usual refuges of the hunted.

In these sections it is part of the duty of each uniformed policeman to know every man and woman on his beat—his habits, something about his movements, and how he makes his living.

Any lodging or boarding house is under surveillance of the police to a greater or less degree, no matter in what city or district it may be. So Slim had gone out into a residential district and rented a front room, for which he paid twelve shillings every week.

There were plenty of transients in this residential district. There are one or two hotels, several lodging and boarding houses, and a great many thrifty housewives add to the weekly income by letting one or two rooms. But these lodgers are clerks, accountants, a few manual labourers — the police do not look there for professional safe-blowers.

And that was Slim's business, or trade — safe-blowing. And just now he was "wanted."

A month before, a friend had come to Slim with a tale and a need. The tale was of a certain safe in the home of a millionaire. The need was a safe-blower. The friend was a burglar, none better in the country, but a safe was beyond his talents. Would Slim help?

The plunder would be great; the friend had what purported to be a list of the contents of the safe. Would Slim share the profits—and the risks?

Slim would.

At first he was reluctant. He did not like the idea of safe-blowing in a dwelling. Show him a bank; show him a country post-office or an office building. Give him but half-a-chance and a few ounces of nitro-glycerine, and then watch what he could do. But to blow a safe on the first floor while half-a-dozen people slept upstairs—that was a bit different.

Besides, he was living at home with his mother in Columbus. He was not quite broke, and what was the use of going to work when one had money? The police were not bothering him. He liked the quiet and safety for a time. But—all right, then; he would go.

He did. The millionaire was supposed to be at the theatre that night with his family. He would have been but for a headache. He heard the muffled crash when Slim's nitro tore off the hinges of the safe, and came down to investigate. And Slim's companion drilled a ragged hole through his forehead with the bullet from a seven-and-sixpenny, second-hand revolver.

Slim got as far as Chicago. Then he calculated that all lines of travel had become prohibitive, because of the vigilance of every policeman and detective between New York and San Francisco. He went straight to West Eighteenth Street, where he represented himself to be a magazine agent—and he did carry forged credentials which proved him to be duly authorised to solicit subscriptions for a nationally famous periodical; he never ventured out without them.

Once in Chicago, he posted a letter care of a certain lawyer in Columbus. The lawyer turned it over to a certain saloon-owner. And the saloon-owner turned the enclosure over to another crook who had gained fame as a confidence man. He was the one man in the world whom Slim could trust.

He sent Slim sufficient funds to maintain him until the keen edge of the man-hunt had worn off and he could get out of the country.

Now he had written to Slim again. The last paragraph of his letter ran:

I sent one of the boys over to see your old woman, as you said. I sent a bit of change. He

said she is in a bad way. I guess it's all up with her. I wouldn't have wrote but she was crying and carrying on, and he promised he would see that you got word that she was sick. So I have done so. It is tough luck, Slim. I know how you liked her.

Yours resp.
Your pal
JIM.

That was all—the stilted, half-formal, half-colloquial phrases that always result when a half-educated man busies himself with pencil and paper.

Your ordinary, respectable citizen scatters a great deal of affection. Children in the street, the men and women with whom he works, society in general—for all of these he has affection, besides the love he bears his kindred and his friends.

But the crook neither wastes nor scatters a single heart-beat of love or loyalty. Society wars upon him and hounds him. Therefore he hates society. The men and women with whom he works are not to be trusted. Any of them would betray him to buy their own freedom or safety. Therefore he distrusts them.

And so all affection, all loyalty, all love in the crook are centred in a few individuals, perhaps in one. Oftenest it is some woman of the underworld for whom he kills and for whom he dies. Again it is some male companion in crime. Rarely it is a member of his own family, a brother, a father, a sister, sometimes a mother—if he has one and knows who she is.

Slim loved his mother. She was all he had to love, all he dared to love. His mother knew her boy was a crook, a thief, but she was honest herself. She hated his way of life, but she loved him with an intense, tigerish affection, made more devoted by the bitter struggle to keep the boy and herself from starving after the death of her machinist husband years before.

Now she was ill in the little house in Dennison Avenue—old, helpless. "I guess it's all up with her," Jim had said; and she was crying for her boy.

All right, she'd have him. Slim was going back home. There was just a chance that he might escape the police guard that Slim knew had been on his mother's home since the Cleveland murder. It was now a month since the crime, and pursuit and guard would have grown more perfunctory.

He'd go home to his mother. If he got there he'd sit down on her bed, and she'd embarrass him by insisting on kissing him. He'd grin shamefacedly and growl a few guttural monosyllables. But his mother'd know—she'd know how he loved her. He ran over his store of money; yes, he had enough to buy her half-a-dozen yards of black silk. Slim lacked originality in the matter of presents, and in the last few years had carried home enough black silk for old Mrs. Carper to have started a shop.

Slim slipped off a Pennsylvania train in the Columbus station, and climbed the steps, keeping well in the middle of the crowd. He stayed in the shelter of the crowd until he reached the street, and then he cut across on a bee-line for home. He limped a trifle, for even his walk was known in this, his home town.

Fate had been with him so far. At the next corner she conspired against him. He turned it, and almost collided with a couple of men strolling in the dusk of the early evening. They were Arden and Fenster, police headquarters men, and both knew him. Slim went by them like a shadow. He fought to keep his nerve and not to hurry. But it was his silence, a certain shadow-like quality that betrayed him.

The two detectives turned to stare after him. Idly, for they had not yet recognised him, they followed him.

"Who's he?" asked Fenster.

"Dunno," returned Arden. And that was reason enough for following him.

Slim heard them pause, and then retrace their steps. He dared not look round. He struggled not to run. It was more than cold nerve—and Slim had his share—could do to keep from hastening his steps. At that the steps of the two men in the rear sounded more sharply.

"Hey, there," shouted Arden at length; "wait a second."

Even yet they did not recognise Slim. They intended only to prove to themselves that this silent, shadow-like young fellow was harmless, and then send him on his way with a growl or a jest.

Slim knew the territory which he had reached. At the call of the detective he turned into the stairway that led to the rooms over Mickey Byrne's saloon. He had dropped out of the window at the end of the hall before.

As Slim turned into the stairway, Arden and Fenster began to run. As Slim reached the window, he heard the pounding of their feet on the stairs. Both of them were known in the underworld as quick to use their revolvers. Slim had trouble getting the window up. The rusty catch delayed him, and as he was about to put a leg over the sill, came the roar of Fenster's gun, and glass sprinkled about his head from the broken pane above.

Came an answering roar in the confined hallway as Slim's automatic spoke. Fenster, who had fired when he was head and shoulders above the stair landing, stopped suddenly now, and then fell forward on his face. Then he seemed to roll end over end down the stairs. Halfway down, the dead body struck Arden, and the living partner and the dead one rolled down the steps together.

"It's him!" was the remainder of the yell, but no one heard it, for it died in his throat as Slim's pistol spat once—

Slim dropped from the window to a shed roof and to the ground. He had a chance to get away—away from Columbus. There were trains he could get before "general orders" had reached all policemen. Trams, motor-cars—all gave him a chance.

But Slim was going home. He was going to see "th' old woman" before she died. But with Fenster's limp roll down the stairs it became not a question of Slim's mother living until her son saw her, but of Slim's living until he got to his mother.

Down the alley he went for half a block, and cut through to the next street parallel to the one he had left when Fenster and Arden had "made" him. He quickened his steps, fell into half a run. Seconds counted now, and concealment didn't.

Behind him, in the next street, the one he had left, he heard the roar of a motor-car, silencer cut out, the Maxim-like crack of the motor telling of hurtling speed. They were after him! He snarled while he smiled.

Now he ran, elbows pressed to sides, breathing sparingly. Into Haddam's lumber-yard—he remembered old man Haddam the day he and the kids had—well, never mind; he was going home now—trying to get there before "they" did.

In his ears was the roar of the motor-car. Through the alleys of

the lumber-yard he dodged, in and out. He came to the opposite side and to the street. Across the littered, muddy street was home. In that little house lived "th' old woman."

Old Mrs. Carper! Dull, drab widow of old Henry Carper, machinist! Life but an endless succession of work-filled days! Birth, marriage, death, the only events! Old Mrs. Carper! But a man had killed that he might hear her trembling-lipped greeting, and grunt out an unintelligible reply in return—and he would kill more.

—The foremost one stopped short, tottered, seemed about to fall backward, and then fell forward.

Even as Slim broke from the shadow of the lumber-piles, the motor-car crashed into the street at the corner below. He was in the middle of the road as the car stopped half a hundred feet from him. He was still in the street, pistol in hand, as dark figures—one, two, three, four—sprang into separate being from the dark blur of the car.

"Carper!" screamed the foremost one.

"It's him!" was the remainder of the yell, but no one heard it, for it died in his throat as Slim's pistol spat once. The foremost one stopped short, tottered, seemed about to fall backward, and then fell forward.

Slim's automatic cracked continuously. The answers from the revolvers of the three who were left came in volleys. One of the three fell.

Slim was now on the doorstep of home. They were getting him. Out there in the road he had stopped a couple of bullets—shoulder, thigh, so that he limped—blood in his throat—choking him—that door—he would reach it—he had reached it!

Old Mrs. Carper heard the shots in the street. The neighbour who had been sitting with her all the evening had gone on a flying visit home to see that her children were not setting fire to themselves or the house. So, with many groans, old Mrs. Carper got out of bed, for curiosity will not be denied. Holding to the back of a chair that she dragged with her, she made her way to the door. As she approached, she thought she heard footsteps. She opened the door.

A figure fell in towards her, the forward-flung hands within an inch of her gown. The figure fell as though it were a dummy of straw made by boys. But it wasn't straw, for as it fell, a splash of blood leapt forward and stained old Mrs. Carper's white night-gown from waist to hem.

Slim had come home.

Photo. Russell.
Lady Warwick, who writes so delightfully on the subject of garden parties.

The GARDEN PARTY

By Lady Warwick.

The garden party is a form of entertainment which even in war-time may be indulged in, since it is quite inexpensive, and may easily be turned to a charitable purpose. In the following article Lady Warwick gives some valuable hints to would-be hostesses.

Garden parties are pleasant social functions enough if only the weather will prove kind. Even the war has not put an end to them, for there are so many soldiers home on leave and happy to renew their acquaintance with garden land, and there are invalid soldiers to whom the garden is a form of healing. In some countries you can issue invitations with perfect safety, for the weather is quite reliable, but in England it has all the charm of the unexpected, and even the professional optimist must confess that a heavy shower will spoil the best-laid plans of the hostess. It is well nigh impossible to take precautions, for, owing to the popularity of the garden party, invitation cards (stating that the hostess will be "at home" on such a day from four till seven) are sent out three weeks or even a month in advance of the date.

If there is any special attraction, such as a pastoral play or a special band, the fact is noted on the lower left-hand corner of the card. The only thing a hostess can do to safeguard her guests is to have ample field tents known as marquees set up in case of rain, though she well knows that nothing can save all the pretty frocks from damage should the weather become unfriendly.

The garden party is an *omnium gatherum*. You ask friends, acquaintances, neighbours, and even those who may be staying with your friends, in lavish fashion, the only limit in the case of large grounds being enforced by the amount of tent accommodation that may be set up without making the garden look like a camp. In addition to the marquees for guests, there must be one for chauffeurs, coachmen, and grooms, for whom tea is provided. If the house is near a country town it is sometimes customary to give the chauffeurs and other attendants a ticket that will entitle them to tea and suitable refreshment at some of the inns. In the days before the motor-car was ubiquitous, the question of stabling was a serious one in houses removed from a town, but here again the special marquee came to the rescue when the ordinary stabling was exhausted.

Although there is no end to the resources of beautiful gardens, it should be remembered that there will not be a very large proportion of keen horticulturists in the average gatherings, and on this account I have always endeavoured to provide some definite attractions, the pastoral play being in my opinion the best of these. A good band, suitably protected against the weather, is also desirable.

If the day of the garden party is cloudless and rain is not expected, some of the precautions can be relaxed at the eleventh hour, but it is always well to be prepared for the worst, and it must be possible, should it be necessary, to have the play performed under cover even though a great part of the charm is thereby lost. In spite of the inevitable risks garden parties are immensely popular, and in normal years are frequent throughout the summer. Even now people feel that there

is more excuse for a garden gathering than for any other form of pleasure seeking.

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The duties of hostess at a garden party are not very onerous. If she has the garden party habit the preliminaries give very little trouble, and when the afternoon comes round her only task is to receive her visitors and to avoid her friends. I do not want to be taken quite literally in these last words, but I want to emphasise the fact that the hostess on this occasion belongs to all her visitors and not to a small section of them. She should take her place at some convenient spot where the gardens are nearest to the point of arrival, and there receive everybody. Her visitors will be duly announced as they approach her.

Having received from her greeting the freedom of the gardens, they will pass on to find their own amusement. Only when the stream of arrivals is exhausted may the hostess find a little leisure, and if she has the luck, she may enjoy a little of the music or the play. Although a garden party is so free from formalities and a hostess cannot be expected to know all her visitors, the intrusions of the uninvited are quite rare, far less common indeed than at receptions in town, so that it has never been necessary to take precautions against them.

With regard to refreshments, simplicity is the rule. Tea, coffee (hot and iced), lemonade, all sorts and shapes of sandwiches and cakes, fruit and cream, these suffice. At a few parties the hostess may follow the example of royalty at Windsor Castle and add claret and hock cups, but this is not often done. It is best to have little tables holding from four to six people scattered about the gardens, care being taken to choose the most pleasant situations and to avoid any serried array. They should be within reasonable distance of the buffet where, for the sake of convenience, everything is served.

It is well to have plenty of fruit and cream, a fact that many hostesses seem to forget, though their own gardens and home farm could supply all they need of both. Even if the strawberry has passed, there are often things to take its place. It is important that those who want tea or hot coffee get what they ask for, but this is merely a matter of proper catering; there is no excuse for the half cold tea and coffee that one meets from time to time. If it be possible it is well to have your own table appointments, but when a large party is invited this may prove impossible.

The hostess must not in ordinary times expect to find many men among her guests unless she has chosen a Saturday afternoon for her garden party; on other days she will find they are conspicuously absent, largely on account of affairs, partly because they are not as interested as women are in the millinery display. Now, of course, there are plenty of men who would infinitely prefer to be more actively engaged. It is not customary for guests to stay to the last minute of the invitation; the exodus becomes general very soon after six, and only intimate friends may, perhaps, stay a little later for a few minutes' conversation with the hostess or her family.

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As I said, the motor-car has added

The hostess welcomes her guests at some convenient spot near the point of arrival, and they are then free to pass on and find their own amusement.

much to the possibilities of the garden party, but general invitations are spread over a rather limited area. One would not expect an invitation to a garden party in the next county, for example.

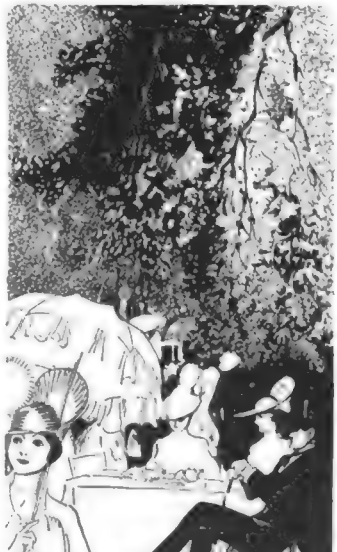
In the days when facilities for getting about were few, the best garden parties were given near town. The Duchess of Northumberland at Sion House, Lady Jersey at Osterley Park, the Baroness Burdett Coutts at Holly Lodge were perhaps the best known entertainers in the field. The first named gave purely social functions not quite free from formality, the second surrounded herself with politicians, and the last named delighted in receiving the social and artistic world.

The most wonderful garden party in my recollection was given by the late Lord Salisbury when he was Prime Minister, at his country seat, Hatfield House, in Hertfordshire. It was in honour of the Shah of Persia, then on a visit to this country. The Shah appeared in full state dress with a dazzling display of diamonds, and everyone wore their best to do honour to the occasion. The weather was superb, suggesting that the Premier's control of Foreign Affairs reached as far as the blue above, and that he had annexed cloudland for the afternoon; the sight of the brilliant company in the wonderful setting of the gardens at Hatfield was unforgettable. Lady Salisbury was the most distinguished hostess of her generation.

In some of the great London houses it is possible to give garden parties, albeit on a small scale, and when this is done and the weather fails the reception rooms are thrown open, and the function partakes of the nature of an ordinary "at home." Marlborough House garden led the way in the eighties; Lansdowne and Devonshire House also, and Stafford House garden parties were events

A hostess should exercise care in the choice of her caterers, and should look for herself with a critical eye at what they propose to provide in the way of silver, plate, teathings, and table linen. There are firms in London that can rival the hostess' own store, but they are few. I could name perhaps a dozen. One that I have employed on many occasions was established by a company of retired servants from royal and leading houses. Not only does it possess wonderful silver, glass, china, and linen, but it employs only skilled men who know by lifelong experience how visitors should be received and catered for.

It has the additional advantage of being able to send people who know the leading figures in the social world by sight, and in the capable hands of such a firm the hostess finds her anxieties reduced to a minimum, and knows that everything will be done in the best possible manner. Within proper limits the arrangements for a garden party cannot be made too well.



Quite simple refreshments are the rule, and little tables should be scattered about the gardens where the guests may enjoy their tea and each other's society.

The Royal garden parties at Windsor in the late reign were, of course, purely formal functions, and they were stately rather than exciting. The number of guests might run into four figures, and while the grounds were splendid, the music the best, and the refreshments more varied than those that generally obtained elsewhere, the formality stood between most people and real enjoyment.

Then, too, the majority of the visitors were painfully anxious to know who everybody was; there was among the ladies a wild and really unnecessary anxiety about their dress, and the whole affair partook more of the

There is something very delightful about a garden party in the heart of London, and it is quite possible for hostesses whose town houses boast good gardens to entertain their guests in this way.

nature of a reception than a real party in a garden. Yet invitations were always sought with immense eagerness; they were formal affairs, large cards stating that the Lord Chamberlain had been commanded by the King to invite so and so to attend, and, as a Royal invitation is in the nature of a command, it was not customary to reply. Special trains were run from town to Windsor, though the ubiquitous motor-car carried a large proportion of the visitors.

There was no formal reception. Royalty, however hard-working, could not accomplish such a task as welcoming its hundreds of guests, but during the afternoon in the old days the King and Queen, with members of the Royal Family followed by lords and ladies in waiting, grooms, and equerries, would pass down the gardens. Then the guests lined up on either side and formed a living avenue that swayed in bows and courtesies as the royal party passed along.

The King and Queen had a quick eye and a word of welcome for all they knew personally, and brought their promenade to an end under the wonderful tent, or rather canopy, that was presented, if my memory serves me truly, by one of the Indian States to Queen Victoria.

There tea was served for the Royal Family and perhaps some of the most eminent guests—the Prime Minister or Archbishop of Canterbury, for example, would be invited to join the Royal circle. Any very distinguished foreigner was safe to receive this marked attention from King Edward.

This was the purely ceremonial part of the function; when it was over tea was served throughout the gardens for the multitude of visitors, and they could then, if they were so minded, enjoy the music or the flowers or visit the state apartments that were opened on these occasions.

The hour of the Royal Garden Party was usually from four to seven and the Royal progress was generally made on the right side of five o'clock. It goes without saying that no garden party gathers an equal number of interesting people, but, unfortunately, there were too many of them, more than any lounger could hope to appreciate.

Those who enjoyed the Windsor garden parties most were, I think, the visitors from the Overseas Dominions, who could not help being impressed by the stateliness of ceremonial, the lavish hospitality, and the splendid background of the old Castle. I wonder if these functions are among those that will return with peace.

(Next month Lady Warwick contributes another charming article.)

Men · Who Make · Us · Laugh ·

By Margaret Chute.

Photo Hugh Cecil

Mr. Raymond Hitchcock's methods are of the quiet and confidential order, and thus never fail to get his audience rocking with merriment.

RAYMOND HITCHCOCK.

Mr. Raymond Hitchcock is one of America's brightest and best, a comedian whose name is a household word throughout the land. The following character sketch goes far to explain the wistful charm which delighted London when he appeared in *Mr. Manhattan*.

"Hitch" is here! And England is brighter for his presence. Ten thousand pardons—I should have said Mr. Raymond Hitchcock, America's "household-word" comedian, is playing to English audiences at last, and we are very glad to see him. For he is a laughter-maker of rare and unusual excellence. Unforced are his methods—but forceful the results he obtains.

Personally, I should like to christen him the Confidential Comedian. Without raising his voice, without any wild gesticulations, Mr. Hitchcock grips tight hold of his listeners, and has them laughing before they know he is even trying to raise a smile. His "asides" are priceless, and something new to us.

For instance, in the middle of a stage scene, Mr. Hitchcock—detaching himself quietly from the actress of the moment—steps to the footlights, stretches out his hands, and says in a hoarse whisper to the entire audience:

"If you can't help me in this matter—*remain neutral!*"

Then he steps back, and picks up the scene again

Later, having kissed the wrong girl, under the nose of the right girl, he again advances to the footlights, again stretches out his hands, and over comes another husky whisper:

"Maybe, *she* didn't see me kiss *her!* S-sh!"

A pause. Then:

"Say—if *she* asks *you* if I kissed that other girl—don't you tell her!"

From America, the Confidential Comedian has brought a dirge-like ditty, which is doubtless all over the place ere now, while its title—"All Dressed Up—and No Place To Go!"—will inevitably become a catch-phrase. With melancholy intensity Mr. Hitchcock intones this really classic ballad, singing well off the note most of the while. To his great joy he has discovered that the verse which "went" best in Noo York is the verse that also goes best in this country. Here it is—minus the wistful charm of the inimitable "Hitch":

When you're all dressed up, and no place to go,
Life seems dreary, weary, and slow,
My heart has ached and bled
For all the tears I've shed,
When I d no p ace to go—
Unless I went home to bed!
We're all at sea about the German War:
How did it start? one asks, and what is it for?
I'll tell you how, by Heck, and you'll *know* it's so—
The Kaiser was all dressed up—and no place to go!

If you've heard him render these lines, you'll be glad to see them in print. If you *haven't* heard him—well! . . .

In America, Raymond Hitchcock is known and loved throughout the land. The way he is called, affectionately, "Hitch," "Hitchy," or "Hitchy-Coo," by friends and the great public alike, is proof of his real hold on the hearts of the people.

"Funny thing," said he, smoothing his chin—a characteristic movement—"I don't think I've ever been called Raymond since I was a small kid. It's always been "Hitch"—just "Hitch." Sometimes fellows who want to put over a bluff that they sort of know me well, come up and say, 'Howdy, Raymond old boy! Glad to see you, Raymond!' And then I meet a real pal, and he butts in with, 'Say, Hitch, I don't think great things of your pals who call you Raymond!'

"And the laugh's on me, because I can just murmur, 'They're not!' Which is true, because I'm only 'Hitch' to my pals. And let me tell you that I never felt really at home in this country till I bumped into one of the lovely chorus girls in *Mr. Manhattan*, and she blurted out, 'Look out, Hitchy!' Then I *knew* I was at home, all right!"

Fifteen years "Hitch" has been making our Yankee friends laugh, and in all that time he has longed always to visit us over here. Said he, telling me of this:

"I waited a *long* time for England to send for me, but it didn't happen—and so I came myself. Ten years ago it was all fixed up for me to play here; then, at the last minute, something stopped it. Most years since then I've been coming—and it hasn't happened till now.

"I think England's fine—this is a great big adventure to me. S-sh—don't you tell anyone—I felt like I'd never done *anything* in my life before, and I had to start in all over again from nothing. That song of mine—'All Dressed Up, and No Place To Go'—I brought it along with me, to make me feel at home, you know, and I got so scared about things that I thought I'd try it on an English audience. So I did, on the boat, and when they

The American comedian's "asides" are something new to English theatre-goers, and have all the charm of the unexpected.

Photo *Hugh Cecil.*
Americans have been laughing for fifteen years at the inimitable "Hitch," the name by which he is known to public and friends alike.

liked it, a great load was lifted off my heart."

He started amusing folk as an amateur, this fascinating "Hitch," and played in Gilbert and Sullivan operas. Then he plunged into chorus, in a repertory opera crowd, on the road. Soon after that the leading comic man went "sick," and Raymond Hitchcock took his place. After his first performance—also in Gilbert and Sullivan opera—during which he "gagged" enormously, the manager tore round and shouted:

"I don't know whether I'm going to fire you for putting in gags, or whether I'm going to let you keep the part, because the audience had the bad taste to laugh at the lines that ought not to have been there!"

Hitch kept the part, and has been making audiences display the same bad taste ever since.

He is brimming over with stories; here is one yarn he murmured over a bowl of Noodle soup in a Chinese restaurant—for he eats only Chinese food, and suffered from misery and indigestion on this island till he discovered a Chinese food emporium. Said Hitch, with infinite calm:

"Once I came back to my flat in Noo York City after the show, and seated in the hallway I found a nurse girl and an eight-months-old baby! Nurse girl clutched a letter; letter was from unknown female. She wrote:

"'I've seen you act, and I like you. All the folks are sick in this house, and the baby cried so that I'm sending her along to you with the hired-girl. Please look after her. I know you are good-natured, 'cos I've seen your show.'

"Well, what would *you* do if you found a strange eight-months-old baby and a strange eighteen-years-old hired-girl in your flat? I cleared out and left them in possession. I lived at the club till the folks in the house got over being sick, and I've never set eyes on the mother of that baby in my life!"

At an insane asylum Hitch had a queer experience.

"Having arrived to do a show at this place, I met a fellow there who recognised me.

"'How d'you do, Mr. Hitchcock?' he began, quite normally, then broke off and spoke solemnly to the empty air above his head, saying:

"'Excuse me—I'll attend to you in a few minutes. I've got some pals over for the afternoon.'

"To me he turned again and said:

"'Don't you remember the last time I saw you was in——'

"Once more he broke off, and spoke again to the air:

"'Yes, yes—I won't be long. Excuse me just a minute——' And so it went on.

"When I began my show I told insane stories to those poor souls, and they laughed and cheered, especially when I said:

"'At last I've got here! I should have been here long ago!'

"Going out, I was with one of the doctors, when the man who had recognised me stopped us.

"'Just a minute, doc,' said he. 'Say, did you hear Hitch's talk? Now, I ask you, he's crazier than I am, isn't he?'

"It was a weird experience—the mixture of sanity and madness struck me with horror and filled me with sympathy."

For a quaint story, Raymond Hitchcock and the Lion take some beating. His own words tell it best:

"When dollars were scarce with me, I boarded at a theatrical place—we have them, back home, and they are kept mostly by ex-stage ladies of opulent charms and peroxide hair. Now, *my* particular house was run by a lady who had been a lion-tamer. Let me assure you, right here, that once the sawdust of the circus gets into your blood, no sort of earthquake is ever going to budge it!

"Now one Sunday morning I was lying in bed, drinking coffee and reading some critic's opinion of my acting. Suddenly the newspaper which I was holding in front of my face received a friendly pat, which dislocated it into several thousand pieces—while I gazed into the yellow eyes of a huge Nubian lion!

"That lion said nothing—nor did I. But most of my past life—and future possibilities—flashed before my mental gaze in a multi-coloured moving picture. Clutching the pillow, I was about to hurl it when a piercing yell rang through the house: '*Ben-nee! Ben-nee!*'

"That lion tapped my knee with his paw and gazed at me, as much as to say, 'For the love of Mike, don't let on I'm up here!' Out rang that shrill shriek again, and then the lion put his tail between his legs and skipped out of my room like a timid mouse.

"He had felt in other days the heaviness of the ex-lion-tameress' hand when she was peeved—and peeved she surely was! For Benny had given her game away. You see, unable to exist without at least one lion to keep her spirits up, my landlady had clung to Benjamin Butler—to give him his full title—and kept him in a large kennel in the back-yard in profound secrecy. Whenever the boarders mentioned a roaring sound in the night, she called it thunder!

"But Benny was a sweet soul, with marked social instincts, and we became quite friendly after our informal introduction, till I grew to treat him like a large kitten. Three years later I was walking along a street in Concord, Mass., when I beheld a huge placard advancing. It said:

"'To-night. The Big Show. Murphino, the bravest man alive, will go through his famous and hair-raising act with Wallace, the ferocious, man-eating lion.'

"After the placard strode the band—two cornets—and behind them came a cart containing the brave Murphino, wearing a tiger-skin, and surrounded by guns, swords, and red-hot pokers to control the monster. Beside him reposed a lion, and, by the social smile in his yellow eyes and his moth-eaten tail, I should have recognised that lion anywhere. It was Ben-nee!

"Now—I couldn't help it—I just opened my mouth and bellowed 'Ben-nee!' With a roar of joy, that lion took a flying leap over Murphino, the guns, swords, and hot irons, and rubbed himself against my legs—gladder than glad to see me. Yes—there was *some* riot in that town! Murphino reclaimed his lion—or, rather, Benny walked back quietly to the cart with me, and then the crowd got busy with the bravest man on earth.

"I was arrested for creating a disturbance, but it was worth it just to see that leap of Benny's and to feel his old head rubbing against my legs! Talk about 'All Dressed Up and No Place To Go'—that wasn't in it with Murphino, the bravest man ever! *Some* give-away, believe me!

"And this story is true; moreover, it is recorded in the police records of the *Morning Herald*, Concord, Mass.!"

Photo Hugh Cecil.

Raymond Hitchcock has always longed to visit England, and London audiences will be reluctant to lose his droll, delightful humour.

THE DUEL NEAR NEUVE CHAPELLE

By "Archibald, the Trench-Mortar."

This astoundingly vivid little vignette is written by a man who has been out and seen for himself. It is not altogether untrue.

He was an aristocrat, although only a full private in the Blankshire Regiment; his section called him "Piccadilly Percy."

He had enlisted two years before the war owing to the sowing of a certain wild oat, which was an "everlasting" weed in his people's eyes. But for all that he was a good soldier, although he kept aloof from the men and was inclined to be sullen at times.

"Piccadilly Percy" was, at this moment, lying down on his stomach firing at a hedge in front of him, behind which he was told Fritz was retiring. By his side lay two subalterns cursing a certain regiment because they had not appeared to carry on the pursuit. Suddenly one of these subalterns rolled over (they were both sitting at the moment), with a groan and a gasp.

"Lord! Jack—shot by my own men."

"No, you're not, Arthur! Where are you hit?"

"Here—in the stomach. Oh!—! My own men, too!"

Percy helped to tie him up—the wounded subaltern was his platoon officer. He heard his officer say to the other subaltern:

"You'll find him, Jack, won't you?"

"Yes, I'll find him, Arthur; but, for heaven's sake, lie still. Here, put the morphia under your tongue."

About half-an-hour later a man in Scotch uniform was dragged up out of a shell hole—he had been seen to fire at one of our men. He had no equipment or rifle, but such is a man's repugnance at shooting at an unarmed enemy that the officer ordered Percy to escort him to the rear.

Percy was somehow sure that his spy had shot his platoon officer—and he meant to kill him as soon as he got him out of sight of his officer. No one realises how he hates an enemy till he has seen a friend killed by one. So as soon as Percy got him out of sight, he stopped and said:

"Can you speak English?"

"Perfectly."

"Where did you learn it?"

"I married an English wife."

"You shot my platoon officer."

"Very likely."

"You're a spy."

"A mere name for one who loves his country."

"Have you no respect or love for the English, as you have an English wife?"

"Respect—a little; love—none."

"Are you an officer?"

"Yes. But why all these questions? Your orders were to take me to the rear."

"I'm going to shoot you. . . . You killed my officer, my only pal in the regiment."

"All right—fire away—I'm willing to take the consequences. I have served my country."

"Walk down that trench. Halt! . . . I can't shoot you, why, heaven only knows. March on to the rear."

They went back across various German trenches, which had been captured. Suddenly the spy jumped, and disappeared into a trench. Percy fired, and ran to where the spy had gone—he was about twelve yards behind him. He saw him disappear round the corner of the trench, and bolted after him.

Suddenly, Percy came opposite him round another corner, only now he had a rifle with fixed bayonet in his hand. Percy pulled his trigger. There was a click. His magazine was empty.

"Yes," cried the German, "my magazine is empty as well. Now fight for your spy!"

He came at Percy, who was not an

Slowly, Percy worked his bayonet point towards the German's throat. Suddenly the German swung, and got both hands on to Percy's rifle: his right arm had been jammed up against the side of the trench. [Page 141, col. 1.]

experienced bayonet fighter, but knew the principles of the art. He met his antagonist in the orthodox way, with his left foot forward, and his rifle at the "ready," keeping the point of his bayonet pointing at the eyes of his opponent.

The spy hit his rifle, and made a feint plunge. Percy parried and thrust, missed, and came back to the "ready." He then lunged twice in succession; at the same moment the spy lunged. The point of his bayonet passed through Percy's equipment.

Percy realised that if he stopped close to his antagonist, the German would not be able to release his bayonet. So he pushed him up against the side of the trench, and tried to work his own bayonet up under the German's chin. As he moved it, the German let go of his own rifle and seized Percy's with his left hand.

Slowly, Percy worked his bayonet point towards the German's throat. Suddenly the German swung, and got both hands on to Percy's rifle; his right arm had been jammed up against the side of the trench. They both wrestled for the rifle; they were evenly matched, standing about five foot ten. They swayed from side to side, Percy trying to work the point of the bayonet towards his antagonist.

Suddenly the German let fly with his foot and caught Percy on the point of the knee; with a sudden spasm of fury, he added extra strength to his efforts, and managed to get the point into the side of the German's neck. He saw blood flow, he saw the German's teeth clench, and he saw his eyes shut for a moment, so he let go of the rifle and drove his fist hard at that close-cropped head.

The German dropped, and Percy took the rifle, throwing the other one out of the trench. There lay the German—white, mud on his face, and blood flowing out of his neck.

"Well, spy, you did well—but you might not have died if you hadn't kicked me on the shin!"

Percy stood and looked at him, wondering who his English wife was, when suddenly he saw the German move, open his eyes, and stare at the point of Percy's bayonet, which was very close to his antagonist's throat.

"I'm not dead yet—Gott in Himmel!"

"Apparently not."

"Give me five minutes, and then you can shoot. It was a fair fight, and I lost. I will tell you something. I met my wife in Cairo four years ago, and she was the most beautiful woman God ever made. I proposed at a dance, and she accepted me—we, both of us, had had some champagne—so we went back to the ball-room and announced our engagement to our hostess. Lady Kingsford, our hostess, then gave it out publicly.

"In a week we were married. I was the head of a big German firm in Egypt. I had occasion to go to India, so I took my wife and bought a house in Calcutta, from which I ostensibly carried on my work. I was, in reality, sowing seeds of sedition among the Bengalis; *you'd* call it spying.

"Well, my lord and master, the Crown Prince of Germany, came and visited India. There was a big ball given in his honour. My wife went to it; I was unable to come till late in the evening. When I arrived, I found my wife waiting in the cloak-room, looking very distressed and annoyed. She told me she had been grossly insulted by the Crown Prince, and had been saved from a far worse insult only by the timely intervention of a Captain.

"Well, to cut a long story short, Captain C. eventually ran away with my wife, leaving a note saying he would meet me in Calcutta outside the Grand Hotel at 11 p.m. two days later. I met him, and from what he said I had to let my wife go, and I have never seen her since.

"That is why I hate the English; but, all the same, I respect them. Now you can shoot."

"No; I can't shoot after that," said Percy. "Strip that dead German and change your clothes. I will then take you back as a prisoner, and not a spy."

The German mechanically undressed the corpse and put on coat, top Hessian boots, and trousers.

Percy said:

"Get out of this trench and go on—no more tricks now."

Suddenly there was a deep whistle, followed by a crash. Percy looked, after all was over, and saw his spy lying out on his face.

He touched him—he was dead—German shrapnel had done it.

"Thank God!" said Percy, and returned to the firing-line.

Rub-a-Dub-Dub.

The Terrors of the Wash-tub Illustrated by Leading Humorous Artists.

By Lesbia Robinson.

"Going Aloft"—Mr. Reg. F. Smith depicts the fate of a cat who took his walks abroad on washing-day.

The brunt of the economies in this war is borne by women. It is so easy for a man to cut down the housekeeping allowance and depart for the office in a glow of conscious virtue, feeling he has done his duty if he does not resent the absence of an egg with his breakfast bacon. Tradition has it that man is a reasonable being, and this in spite of the fact that whereas he used to dole out two pounds a week for two pounds' worth of food, he now doles out thirty shillings for forty-five shillings' worth, and expects the deficit to be accounted for by conjuring tricks from his wife.

This being the case, the idea of saving laundry bills by doing the washing at home always appeals to the man of the family. Beyond an odour of soapsuds and a temporary shortness of temper on the part of his wife, the innovation, he fondly imagines, will not touch him. It is only when he is asked to dine off cold meat and beetroot, and finds his favourite corner in the

"Making a Splash"—the trials of flat-dwellers who make a praiseworthy effort to save laundry bills

"To-morrow will be Sunday!"—Esmond portrays the man who washes at home because he has no change of underwear

garden occupied by damp and flapping garments, that his enthusiasm begins to languish.

It is difficult to decide whether summer or winter is the most trying season for the housewife whose Mondays are sacred to the cause of cleanliness. It is no joke to stand up to the eyes amid steaming soapsuds in rapt communion with the family linen, in a temperature reminiscent of the engine room of an Atlantic liner. But at least the clothes can be dried in the garden, instead of festooning the kitchen premises and twining themselves in moist embrace about the heads of the luckless family.

If there are children in the household an element of adventure will be added to mother's cares on washing-day, for unless she puts barbed-wire entanglements round the scullery they are bound to fall in the copper or come off second best in an encounter with the mangle.

Probably before many Mondays have passed she will sigh for the days of Adam and Eve, when washing was reduced to a minimum, and will recognise that for children sackcloth has many points to recommend it.

There are, unfortunately, some men who hail the economy campaign with delight, and insist on totally unnecessary economies being carried out in the home. Mr. Mingy was one of these. Having reduced the servants to one underpaid general, halved his wife's dress allowance, and prohibited the importation into the house of dairy butter, new-laid eggs, rump steak, and other soaring viands, he insisted that the laundry bill must be saved by having a woman in to do the washing.

It was vain for Mrs. Mingy to protest that the charwoman was not yet born who could be inserted into the scullery at the same time as the wash-tub, and that a mangle was not among the attractions of Syringa House. Mr. Mingy foresaw a saving of at least 2s. 11d. a

"The Hand of the Amateur"—Mr. Bert Thomas suggests that the man who is particular about his shirts may find home washing unsatisfactory.

"Getting His Hand In"—a warning to the dutiful husband by Mr. Alfred Leete.

week—he had worked it out to recurring decimals, allowing one glass of inferior beer for the woman and nothing for starch, soap, and blue—and, as he said, firmly and concisely, 2s. 11d. was 2s. 11d.

In the end his long-suffering wife gave in, but not without a firm resolve to cure him. Even Mr. Mingy's enthusiasm began to pall when on the next Monday he was treated to a dinner of pickled herrings and cold bread pudding, while the discovery of a clothes-horse full of damp and steaming garments before the fire in his own particular sanctum roused him to a high pitch of resentment.

The climax came when Mr. Mingy brought home to lunch an elderly business friend of retiring and modest disposition, in whose eyes he was particularly anxious to appear prosperous. His horror was therefore intense when on entering the dining-room, which looked out on the garden, he beheld a clothes-line filled with flapping articles from the wardrobe of himself and his wife.

Considering the innate modesty of his business friend the choice of garments in immediate proximity to the windows was, to say the least of it, unfortunate. Mr. Mingy was a resourceful man, and he was most anxious to correct the impression of poverty created by the near presence of the family washing.

"A Dream of Fair Linen"—Mr. Thomas Henn's idea of the economical man's sleeping visions.

"An Urgent Case"—Mr. Starr Wood gives us the damsel who has studied waist economy to such an extent that she possesses but one skirt.

"Afraid you can't see much of the garden," he said apologetically. "Must dry the clothes, you see; the laundry man didn't call this week, and this is the result. We must try a new laundry next week, my dear," he added, turning to his exultant wife. "What about 'The Cowslip?'"

"I believe it is a very good laundry," responded Mrs. Mingy serenely. "I'll get a price list to-morrow."

Now "The Cowslip" van calls regularly at Syringa House, and Monday is no longer a day of care and fasting in the Mingy household.

THE HUNDRED SOUS.

By William Le Queux.

The post of King's Foreign Service Messenger in war-time is one fraught with enormous danger and difficulty. So Donovan of Downing Street found when he was charged with an important mission to Constantinople which it needed all his resource and ingenuity to carry out.

"I shall be thinking of you every moment that you are away, Hugh," exclaimed Mabel Metcalfe, pale and anxious, as her tall, manly lover rose from the couch where he had been sitting at her side in the fading light of the November afternoon.

Outside, in Draycott Place, taxis were passing to and from Sloane Square, and a car had just pulled up before the door, denoting the arrival of visitors. Donovan of Downing Street, King's Foreign Service Messenger, had called to explain that he was off abroad again upon another secret mission, and for some moments—after he had told her all that he was permitted by the secrecy imposed upon him by the Marquis of Chiddingford, His Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs—they had sat together in complete silence.

Her small hand lay inertly in his, and as she sighed deeply, turning her great dark eyes upon him, her heart was too full for words. He had placed his arm tenderly around her waist and drawn her closer to him with a low whisper of reassurance, but he could feel that his announcement had unnerved her, for she was trembling.

He rose, in fear of the imminent announcement of visitors, and then bent and, kissing her fondly upon the lips, said cheerily:

"I've always been able to get through before, darling. There's no reason why my good luck should desert me now."

"But you say—you admit, Hugh—that it is a very dangerous mission," protested the pretty daughter of the ex-Ambassador to Berlin.

"Not at all, Mabel," he declared. "I shall be all right. Never fear."

"But how shall I know where you are?" she asked bluntly.

"Well, darling, I'm sorry, but I can't explain all to you. It's confidential work," he replied. "But, look! Here is an envelope," and he produced a blue envelope carefully sealed in black wax with his own seal. "Will you put it away in your jewel-box, so that nobody can tamper with it. And if you hear no word of me within six weeks from to-day, please open it, and act just as the letter directs. Will you?" he asked, looking straight into her dark, astonished eyes.

"To-day is Monday, the First of November," he went on. "The date upon which you may open it—not before, remember—is Monday, the Thirteenth of December. But before then I hope either to be back again, or that you will receive word of me by whatever means I find available."

The girl, with her eyes burning with tears,

crushed the envelope into the breast of her blouse, and, clinging passionately around her lover's neck, said:

"Very well, dearest—go. May God's blessing rest upon you. It will. Of that I feel assured because, as you have told me, you are undertaking the risk in the interests of peace!"

He bent and in silence kissed her lips again. Then, stifling down the emotion he felt, for he loved her very fondly, he whispered her an affectionate adieu, promising to be back at her side again at the earliest possible instant.

In Sloane Square he found a taxi, in which he drove to the Grosvenor Hotel, where he alighted and paid the man, while the outside-porter, who knew him well, touched his cap to him as he ascended the steps. He walked to the lift, and, acting as though he were staying in the hotel, ascended to the second floor. Then, having passed along the corridor, he descended again by the stairs into the hall, and with a quick, furtive glance round, passed out by the back way on to the platform of Victoria Station, at that hour crowded with people on their way home from business.

The reason for all this was because he knew that, outside the house in Draycott Place, a very astute person, a little, undersized man, had been patiently watching. The fellow's real name was Hopmann, but he was known under an alias, for he had been twenty years in London and was one of the good "naturalised" subjects of King George, and kept a rather smart hairdresser's shop in Kensington. Hugh, instead of taking another taxi from the front of the station, slipped along the subway into the Underground station, and went by train as far as Blackfriars, where he ascended to the street, and, after halting and pretending to examine a time-table in the booking-office so as to ascertain if anyone had followed him, he entered another taxi, telling the man to put him down in the Essex Road, at the corner of Packington Street.

Having flung himself into the taxi, he sat back, muttering to himself. At last the conveyance drew up at the kerb on the right-hand side of the Essex Road, a few turnings past the Agricultural Hall. That obscure London street of dingy houses is drab even on the sunniest of days, but was the reverse of inviting on that damp November evening. Having paid the driver, he walked a little distance until, before one of the gloomy houses, he halted, ascended the front steps, and let himself in with a latch-key.

The place smelt close and unwholesome, while the gas-jet in the hall had been turned very low for economy's sake. Ascending the stairs, which were covered by well-worn linoleum—now brown but once a bright art green—he entered a sparsely-furnished front room.

It was not a sitting-room, but rather a photographic studio. At one end there stood a big whole-plate camera upon a stand, while there were grey-painted screens, circular screens of white gauze, and other photographic paraphernalia around.

Curiously enough, over the two long windows had been placed dead screens of cloth through which no ray of light could penetrate, and these were only visible when he turned over the electric switch against the door, and by so doing flooded the place with an intense white light from the huge arc lamp.

In a corner stood a big deal table upon which were several photographic negatives in white porcelain trays. He took from one a small square glass and, rinsing it carefully, held it up to the light.

It satisfied him, for, being alone, he smiled contentedly, and quickly replaced it in the tray which was brimful of water.

Then, passing to another tray, he took out a small film not more than two inches square, and, handling it very delicately, he held it also up to the light. He had been at work there all the morning, and that small film had been the result. A smile of satisfaction ran over his clean-shaven features.

"I hope Bettinson will come soon," he remarked, speaking to himself, while at the same moment a stout, black-haired woman of pronounced Cockney type, and wearing a dirty white apron, entered the room without permission, and exclaimed:

"Jackie just heard you come in, Mr. Marvin. I was down in the kitchen. Is there anything you want, sir?"

"Oh, Mrs. Trayle! Only a few sandwiches—just whenever you can get them. I've been so busy. Has anyone called on the 'phone?"

"Only Mr. Bettinson, sir. He said 'e'd be 'ere at eight."

"Thanks," replied George Marvin, the "gentleman lodger" who had occupied those two rooms for three years, being known to Trayle, a hard-working warehouseman in the City, and his wife, as a cinematograph operator who travelled widely, and was often away for weeks—even months—at a stretch. Mr. Marvin was a good payer—he always settled his bills on the nail, and sometimes he even paid his rent in advance when he went away, a fact which, very naturally, endeared him to the frugal Trayle and his

wife—a pair who had ever an eye to the main chance.

Presently there came a sharp knock at the door, and there entered Bettinson, his valet from Half Moon Street, dressed in grey, and looking more like a race-course tout than a gentleman's servant—and for a reason.

"Well?" exclaimed Donovan. "Is Hopmann still on the watch?"

"Yes, sir. He's again keeping observation at the end of Half Moon Street," was his man's reply. "He thought I was going out for the evening with pals, so he didn't follow me."

"Ah! They've evidently found out that I'm off abroad somewhere," remarked Donovan, "and they're trying to pick me up and follow me. I see!"

"That's just it, sir," Bettinson replied. Then, taking from his pocket four large silver coins, he handed them to his master, together with a letter, saying: "I've brought these for you."

The Honourable Hugh Donovan took the coins and turned them over in his hand. They were four French five-franc pieces, which he laid upon the table beneath the strong light.

For a moment he looked at them intently, then with a curiously self-satisfied smile, he slipped them into his pocket.

Afterwards, having given Bettinson certain instructions how to act in his absence, he dismissed him.

He busied himself with his photography until past ten, when, having eaten his sandwiches, he passed into the small, stuffy little bedroom, where, from a cupboard, he took out a suit of very shabby workman's clothes of a decidedly foreign cut, and exchanged his own clothes for them.

Having done so, he paused before the glass in order to examine himself.

Truly his appearance had become wonderfully altered.

The drab shirt he wore had a soft turned-down collar, beneath which was a drab silk cord which he had tied in a knot in lieu of a cravat, while the old dark grey suit was greasy and worn at the elbows and knees. His cap was a foreign one, with an abnormal peak, and his appearance was that of a foreigner, a working engineer, or perhaps a locomotive cleaner.

He tore open the letter which Bettinson had brought, and in it found a note from a friend which inclosed a passport, bearing the photograph of a thin-faced man, duly stamped and announcing in Dutch to all it might concern that the person, Jan Hoevelaken, native of Oosterhout, engineer, was a Dutch subject. The passport, granted at the Netherlands Foreign Office, had been visèd by the Dutch Consuls at Copenhagen, Grimsby, and Liverpool, and also by the Dutch Consul in Paris and the Dutch Consulate in London.

Donovan, having carefully examined all the visas and stamps, laughed to himself mysteriously. Then he took one of the photographic trays and, placing a portion of the passport in water, soaked it until the photograph was removable, after which he very carefully affixed one of his own of the same size and character. Then, with the aid of a camel-hair brush and some violet indelible ink and water, he drew a semi-circle exactly of the same diameter as the official rubber stamp which had crossed part of the face of the genuine photograph.

Afterwards, having dried it very carefully, first between sheets of blotting-paper, and afterwards in a small electrical hot-press, he placed the document within a well-worn pocket-book which he drew from his breast-pocket. Then, taking up the four five-franc pieces with some English silver, he put them into his trouser pocket together with a dozen one-pound Treasury notes.

This done, he took a small paper packet of lamp-black, which with a little oil he rubbed well into his hands, so that even when he afterwards washed them the black remained in the crevices of the skin. Then, placing a few articles of clothing, all of foreign make, in a very battered old canvas-covered valise, also of distinctly foreign manufacture, he examined himself for a last time in the glass.

Afterwards he called up Mrs. Trayle, and, telling her that he would probably be absent a few weeks and giving her four pounds for rent, he wished her good-night, and, carrying his valise, went out into the Essex Road, once full of brightness, but now darkened under the new "lighting order."

Six days later, thin-faced, pale, and hungry-looking, Jan Hoevelaken, in a greasy, threadbare overcoat and with his old valise at his side, sat upon a form in the big waiting-room of the long, bare, snow-swept railway station of Feldkirch, in the Austrian Tyrol, just over the border from Buchs, in Switzerland.

He had passed through France and Switzerland by the omnibus trains—for expresses would not be in keeping with the slender means of a working man—and that day he had journeyed through the snow-clad mountains from Zürich, along the bank of the Wallen See, and over to the frontier.

All his fellow travellers of every class had formed a long queue before the passport office, but to the outward observer time was,

to him, of no consequence, and he waited there in preference to waiting in the icy wind which cut through the great open station, the beginning of the main line to Vienna.

The Austrians were keeping a very watchful eye upon all travellers from Switzerland, for only a few days before three French spies had been arrested—two men and a woman, a Parisian variety actress—who had since been tried and shot in the big fortress at Bludenz. In consequence, the precautions had been redoubled, as Donovan had read in the *Courrier de Genève* in the train on the previous morning.

Therefore, though he waited so patiently, puffing at a very rank *caporal* and expectorating as every good workman should do, he was not at all easy in his own mind. A single slip, and he knew, too well, that the same punishment would certainly be meted out to him.

At last his fellow-travellers were, one by one, rising and going out, therefore, valise in hand, he joined the queue, and after nearly half-an-hour, during which he saw fully half-a-dozen men and women put back because the result of their interrogation had been unsatisfactory, he found himself in a small bare room before a long table whereat sat five Austrian officers, the president, a stout colonel, being in the uniform of the Tiroler Kaiserjager.

Donovan placed his worldly possessions upon the floor, and, after fumbling, produced his borrowed passport with the substituted photograph, the visas of which showed his journey from Flushing by way of England, France, and Switzerland.

The Tyrolese colonel, not knowing the Dutch language, grunted, and asked the traveller, in German, what was his destination.

Donovan, who spoke German excellently, replied in the same language.

"To Budapest, colonel. I am promised work at the State Railway works. My brother is there. Things in Holland are so bad on account of this war."

At a signal from the fat man two soldiers opened the shabby valise and searched its contents, but found nothing suspicious. They conducted the Dutch locomotive engineer to a corner of the room and there searched him thoroughly, making him take off his coat and waistcoat and place upon the table the contents of his pockets, which included the four pieces of French "cent sous"—those "pieces" which always obsess one so at Monte Carlo.

"Where did you learn German so well?" inquired the colonel.

"In Wesel," was the hungry fellow's quick reply. "I was apprenticed there—at the Eckermann works."

The colonel again grunted, and at last handed the passport to another officer, who stamped it on the back and scribbled a signature.

Then Hugh Donovan breathed once more. He took his shabby valise, crossed the station and entered the train for Vienna.

The instant he had left the office, however, the colonel made a meaning sign to another officer in uniform standing in the doorway, and next moment a rather seedy-looking individual, of the commercial-traveller type, lounged leisurely away in the direction Hugh had taken and also entered the train.

Twenty-four hours later the slow train steamed into Vienna, but Hugh, so well known in diplomatic and official circles in the Austrian capital, dare not, of course, go to any of the big hotels, nor eat at the Hartmann, the Kaiserhof, or any of the well-known restaurants.

On the contrary, after inquiry of a railway porter, he went to a very dingy, obscure hotel and restaurant in a back street behind the Ost Bahnhof, where, very travel-weary, he engaged a room and, after having something to eat, went to bed.

That evening, when he rose and dressed, he changed a French fifty-franc note into the Austrian currency, and then went forth for a walk in the Ring, finding Vienna quite as bright and gay as it had ever been, and all the cafés and theatres in full swing.

In his shabby clothes, cloth cap, and cracked boots he lounged along past many places, the interiors of which he knew so well—shops where he had purchased things for Mabel, cafés wherein he had often spent the early hours of the morning, and music-halls where he had drunk champagne with the artistes. None certainly, seeing him ambling along so pinched and pale, would ever have recognised him as the smart, well-set-up Donovan of Downing Street.

He returned to his dingy and not over-clean little room at about eleven, after drinking a glass of beer in the restaurant below, which was full of men and women of the working-class. There was a report that the Russians had been driven back north of Przemysl, hence the capital had gone mad with delight.

Having locked his door Hugh placed his old valise upon his bed, and, unstrapping it, took from it a little portfolio, about eight inches square, of black, shiny leather. It was new, and it contained his certificate of identity with some papers and letters in Dutch.

Handling it with the utmost care, placing his fingers at the edges and not upon the sides, he carried it to the little dressing-table. Then, taking a small box of what was apparently a German tooth-powder, he very carefully dusted it over the shiny leather, after which he inclined the portfolio backwards and forwards, so that the powder ran across the whole surface. Afterwards, opening the window, he shook it off.

A moment later the marks of finger-prints became revealed.

"H'm," he remarked aloud. "I thought as much!"

Then he smiled, rubbed the remaining powder off with his handkerchief and, sitting down, lit a cigarette and calmly reviewed the situation.

He was suspected, and in his absence his belongings had been minutely overhauled. At any moment he might be summoned before the chief of the detective service, and being so well known in Vienna it was quite likely that somebody would identify him if a photograph were taken. He, therefore, decided to leave quickly for Budapest, and, with the object of disarming suspicion, sought the hotel proprietor, paid his modest bill, and inquired for the next train, well knowing that he would be followed.

Hence, on arrival at Budapest next day, he lost no time in applying for employment at the great works of the Hungarian State Railways, just outside the city. Now Hugh Donovan was not exactly without knowledge of a locomotive, for, truth to tell, he had, in order to be able successfully to disguise his real profession, once taken a four-months' course of training at the Doncaster sheds of the Great Northern Railway, and on two previous occasions had successfully passed himself off as an engine-cleaner.

It was as engine-cleaner that he found himself engaged that same day, and two hours afterwards he, with three others, commenced work upon a big black locomotive which had just come in from a run from Brasso—or Kronstadt, as some people know it—on the Roumanian frontier. With all the able-bodied men at the front, much work was being done by women, only the rougher labour being performed by men.

Yet he had not been there six hours before he knew he was suspected by his foreman. Therefore it was no surprise to him suddenly to find himself under arrest and taken to the central police bureau.

There he was very closely questioned and searched. The money from his pockets was placed upon the table at which the white-haired head of the detective service was seated.

Among the few Austrian coins were the four French five-franc pieces which his valet had brought him to Packington Street.

"Why have you got that French money?" asked the Hungarian police official sharply in German. "You can't spend it here!"

"No," replied Donovan, whose face was very grimy, for he had been arrested while at work. "That's why I'm keeping them. I got them in France, and I hope to get them changed one day. I can't afford to lose twenty francs. I tried in Vienna to change them, but nobody would have them."

The official laughed.

"No," he said. "I don't suppose you'll change them anywhere, except in France."

The keen-eyed official proved to be highly suspicious of the movements of the humble Jan Hoevelaken, who spoke such good German, and though his valise was fetched from his lodgings and overhauled without result, yet the contents of his pockets were taken from him, and he soon found himself shut up in a small bare room pending further inquiries.

Hugh's spirits fell. It was not so much the loss of his liberty that he cared about as the loss of those four highly-prized coins. He had told the chief of detective police quite frankly that he was poor, and beyond the few kroner on the table that was all he possessed until he received his first week's pay at the works.

"Bah! Do not trouble," replied the white-haired man in uniform. "We will take very good care of your money until we have found out who and what you really are. Dutchmen don't come to Budapest without some object."

And with those cold remarks Hugh had to be content, and wear out his weary days in that small, cell-like room in which he was held in detention.

Those four coins worried him greatly. Ah! if they were only safe again in his pocket! Hour after hour he sat with his chin upon his hand, wondering. No doubt he had been suspected ever since he had crossed the frontier in Feldkirch, and had been watched in consequence. He wondered, too, how Mabel was faring, and whether the Chief, in his busy life of directing the foreign affairs of the British nation, ever gave a thought to the man whom he had sent upon such a highly dangerous mission.

Eight long days, and longer never-ending nights, passed, until one morning a warder summoned him, and again he was taken before the chief of the detective service.

Upon the table lay some money—his money, with those four big silver French coins. His heart gave a great bound, and he held his breath.

The money from his pockets was placed upon the table at which the white-haired head of the detective service was seated. . . . "Why have you got that French money?" asked the Hungarian police official sharply.

That moment was one of the most crucial and exciting in his life. Did they suspect the truth? Did it mean death—or liberty?

The white-haired official smiled and waved the money towards the prisoner, saying very curtly:

"You are dismissed. There seems nothing against you."

And once more Donovan of Downing Street replaced his money in his pocket and walked out into the busy street a free man.

He returned to the railway works, but, owing to his arrest, the foreman told him bluntly that they could employ nobody under suspicion. Therefore, in a state of despair, he wandered for days about the gay city, often passing the great façade of the Hôtel Hungaria which he knew so well, yet looking the very picture of misery. At his obscure hotel behind the station he told the proprietor how the police had prevented him from earning an honest livelihood.

The railway line from Budapest to Constantinople being now under Hungarian control and supervised by the Central Powers, he one day returned to the works, and after much inquiry discovered an office where he petitioned the official in control to allow him to proceed to Constantinople with a view to getting work at the terminus of the Anatolia railway. He was quite frank, showed his passport as a Dutch subject, hence a neutral, and explained how, by a blunder on the part of the too-suspicious police, his chance of any employment in Budapest had been wrecked.

The official, who regarded him with some compassion, gave his consent, and signed for him a permit to proceed to Turkey.

Next day, therefore, he left on the slow train for Semlin and Belgrade, over that line on which he used so often to travel in the pre-war days, when the Orient Express ran through from Ostend to Constantinople.

After four days and nights of very slow and tedious journeying, often through half-excavated tunnels which the Serbs had blown up on their great retreat, he at last arrived at Constantinople.

In normal times the Turkish capital swarmed with spies, but now, under German domination, one could not move anywhere without being suspected. Hugh, to whom Constantinople was as familiar as Kensington, knew that a correct attitude was best. Therefore, after a searching ordeal at the passport office, he was at last admitted by the joint inquisitors of Turkey and Germany, who sat side by side, both wearing fezzes. He avoided Pera, where he was so well known at the Pera Palace Hotel and at the neutral embassies, and took a room down by the landing-stage at Galata, in a low, squalid quarter of the city.

The lodging-house, a dirty, ramshackle one, was a place frequented by labourers and workmen of all nationalities, yet he was bound to live in those sordid surroundings in order to retain the guise he had adopted—a guise which he knew was the only one by which he could hope to penetrate into the heart of the enemy zone.

Next day he crossed the Bosphorus to Scutari, and at Haida Pasha, close by, sought employment in the big German works at the head of the Bagdad Railway. The German under-director informed him that at the moment there was no vacancy, but he might call a week later. With that he re-crossed back to Galata, and began to idle about the streets and the bazaar, acting just as a poverty-stricken stranger would act.

Quickly, however, he knew that his every movement was being watched, therefore he saw that he had acted wisely in at once seeking for work.

On the second morning, when he awoke in his narrow room with bare boards and a broken chair, he found, to his wild dismay, that in the night some thief had entered—even though he had locked his door—and stolen all the money he possessed, including the four five-franc pieces!

Having in frantic haste examined all his pockets, to discover them empty, Hugh Donovan held his breath. His cheeks went pale, and his lips were compressed in blank dismay.

"By Gad!" he gasped, speaking to himself. "Then I've had all this journey for nothing! Anything else but money I might perhaps recover, but the coin of any nation is current in this infernally cosmopolitan city."

He stood motionless in the centre of the room, pondering deeply. Afterwards he examined the door, and saw clearly that the key had no doubt been turned from the outside while he slept.

His first impulse was to complain to the proprietor of the place—a fat, ponderous old Syrian with a dark, evil face—a rank blackguard without a doubt. But on consideration he deemed it best to act diplomatically; therefore, having dressed, he descended, and in passing out saw the old man seated in his dark little den in the passage. He greeted him in French, which the old fellow understood, and then said:

"I had wretched luck last night and lost nearly all my money. I find I have a hole in my pocket, so it must have dropped out as I walked. And in these hard war-times, too!"

The fat old man expressed his sympathy, and then Donovan went forth, strolling along the quay feeling utterly despondent. His spirit was broken. To re-possess those four pieces of a hundred sous each he would have paid a good many pounds. Yet to go to the police he did not dare.

At his wits' ends how to act, and without money, he idled about, smoking cigarettes and carefully avoiding any quarter of the city where he might be known. The outlook was black enough, for the perilous mission

upon which he had embarked had now utterly and ignominiously failed.

The whole of that weary day he went hungry, knowing himself to be closely watched. Just before six o'clock he returned to his room, where, having locked the door, he took his pen-knife and, ripping up the narrow band of light-coloured lining which ran round the waist of his trousers, he drew out a German hundred-mark note.

"There may be just a chance—just a chance in a place frequented by thieves, as this is," he muttered to himself in English, for only a quarter-of-an-hour before, while crossing the Galata Bridge, an idea had suddenly crossed his mind, and he was now acting upon it.

Descending to the old Syrian below, he exclaimed in French:

"I've been endeavouring to get hold of some French five-franc pieces. I've been trying a dozen money-changers, but can't find any. I want to send them to pay a debt to a friend of mine in Rodosto."

"French silver!" grunted the crafty old Syrian in the parti-coloured turban. "H'm! I don't know. My lodgers give me some sometimes. I'll see if I have any."

The old fellow shuffled in his slippers into the adjoining room, and presently returned with a greasy leather bag, out of which he shot a quantity of silver upon the table.

Donovan eyed the heap eagerly.

Yes. There were two. Donovan scanned their dates, but his heart fell. They were not his treasured ones. All the rest was in smaller silver coinage.

"I'll have those," said the man from Downing Street wearily, adding: "Haven't you any more?"

"Ah!" cried the old fellow suddenly. "Why, of course! I remember now. One of my lodgers, on leaving early this morning, paid me some," and, crossing the little den, he took from a shelf high-up four big coins with some smaller silver.

Donovan took them, eagerly glancing at them. His heart gave a great bound. They were the actual ones that had been stolen from his pockets in the night!

Thanking the old fellow, he placed the six coins carefully in his pocket, trying to look unconcerned the while, and tendered the hundred-mark note, duly receiving the change in Turkish piastres.

Then he returned to his room to examine those four stolen coins of which he had so fortunately re-obtained possession. Later, having satisfied himself regarding the identity of the coins—for most five-franc pieces look alike—he went out to a small café, where he sat down and wrote a note, which he afterwards, at seven o'clock, sent by a messenger to the address upon the envelope, first, however, taking great care that his messenger was not watched.

At ten o'clock on the following morning, after executing a clever manœuvre so that he should not be followed, he ran the gauntlet of discovery and ascended the hill to Pera, passing along to the end of the busy Grande Rue, with its cafés, shops, and cinemas, until he entered a quiet street of fine houses with latticed, overhanging windows.

At one of the curtained windows of the largest of the residences—that occupied by His Excellency X—— Pasha, the Secrétaire-Général at the Sublime Porte, and one of the most powerful of the wire-pullers in Turkey—stood a bowl of yellow roses.

Donovan noticing this—for it was a sign—crossed the road and knocked at the door, whereupon an old, grey-bearded man-servant in a fez appeared, and in a moment the half-starved-looking workman was in the hall.

"You have come to pay—eh?" inquired the old Turk in French.

"Yes," was Donovan's answer. Whereupon the servant produced a bill.

Donovan took it, glanced at it, and then, taking from his pocket one of the five-franc pieces, handed it to the man, who at once signed the receipt.

"Please tell His Excellency that I shall call for my backsheesh to-morrow morning, at this hour."

When, next day, he called, the roses were still in the window. The same old man opened the door. Then, when Donovan entered the hall, the old fellow said, with a smile:

"His Excellency is greatly obliged, and sends you his good wishes, together with this as backsheesh."

And he handed back to Donovan the same piece of a hundred sous which he had paid on the previous morning.

A moment later Hugh was hurrying back to Galata, and that same night, complaining loudly that no work was to be had across the Bosphorus, he purchased a third-class ticket for Budapest by the same route he had come.

Though quite apparent that the police were highly suspicious of his movements, and though, when he presented himself for his permit to leave Constantinople, he was submitted to a most rigorous cross-examination, ordered to strip, and everything he possessed carefully pried into, yet there was nothing really suspicious that they could fasten upon, for the story of his failure to get work was a perfectly true one—which they knew.

So, after many hours' delay, he obtained a visa to his passport, and a permit to travel to Hungary.

To describe his various exciting adventures and many hair-breadth escapes from betrayal would take up too much space in these pages, but suffice it to say that, after further pretence to get work at Vienna, and also at Wels, the big railway junction, he was arrested on suspicion by the Austrian authorities as soon as he re-presented himself at the station of Feldkirch, on the Swiss frontier.

He was conveyed back to Innsbrück, and there detained, while strict inquiries were made in Wels, Vienna, and Budapest as to whether his story of his applications for work was true. Hugh, who had foreseen such *contretemps*, had, however, taken every precaution to establish the *bona fides* of his statements, with the result that, after nine anxious days, he was released and allowed to proceed over the frontier to Buchs—which is in Swiss territory—thence rapidly making his way back to Downing Street by Zürich, Pontarlier, and Paris.

Late one grey afternoon, Hugh Donovan, having driven to Packington Street and there changed his clothes, arrived at Downing Street, and without ceremony was at once admitted to Lord Chiddingford's big, sombre room.

His lordship, in eager surprise, rose from his chair to greet him.

Without replying, but only smiling in triumph, Hugh drew from his pocket the French five-franc piece and placed it upon the blotting-pad before his Chief.

"What's that for?" asked the Chief, taking it up quickly and examining it. Hugh, however, took from his overcoat pocket a little packet, from which he produced two metal plates about four inches square. The centre of each was hollowed, and into the hollow of one he fitted the coin, while he placed the second plate over it.

Then, giving the two plates a sharp twist in opposite directions, he drew them apart, and it was then seen that the coin had fallen in halves, while in a cavity there reposed, to his lordship's astonishment, a small circular photograph, which Donovan released with the point of his penknife, and placed carefully upon the pad.

Lord Chiddingford quickly took from a drawer a large, square and very powerful reading-glass, which he eagerly focussed upon the tiny photograph.

For some minutes he remained closely examining it. Then, with a sigh of relief, he handed the glass to Donovan, to whose eyes there was at once revealed a dispatch marked "Secret," written by X—— Pasha's own hand, and signed by him.

Through the glass Hugh read as follows, in French:

"Having received your lordship's secret dispatch, and having considered the satisfactory assurances of His Britannic Majesty's Government in case of Turkey wishing to conclude a separate peace with the Allies, I, in return, hereby give my personal and confidential assurance to your lordship that a great patriotic movement is already on foot throughout the Turkish Empire with that object.

"It is felt both in Constantinople and in the vilayets that the salvation of Turkey is only to be found in throwing off the yoke of Germany.

"The power of B—— Pasha is rapidly waning, and he has no longer the confidence of His Majesty the Sultan. The party favourable to the Allies is actively at work and is increasingly strong, therefore at any moment your lordship may hear that such a *coup* as suggested has actually been accomplished. To your lordship I send my heartiest salutations and compliments.
—X—— Pasha."

"Well, Donovan," remarked the Foreign Secretary, with a smile of intense satisfaction upon his grey countenance, "thanks to your ingenious aid, we have not only secured this important information, which will considerably relieve our anxiety regarding the Near East, but we have here a reassurance from X—— Pasha of his friendship, and that Turkey already realises that she has been badly misled by Germany, and will, ere long, be ready for *pourparlers* with a view to a separate peace with the Allies."

Hugh, taking up the hollow coin—which had been ingeniously weighted with lead to give it its proper feel—and the two steel plates, replaced them in his pocket.

"I have only done my duty," was his modest reply. "It was rather fortunate that I recollected our friend X—— to be a very enthusiastic amateur photographer."

That same evening—the evening of Monday, December 13th, the very day on which Hugh had arranged with Mabel to open the sealed envelope he had given her—he sat alone with her in the drawing-room at Draycott Place, and, with his arm fondly about her, described, much as I have here chronicled it, his adventurous mission to deliver that silver coin, which the French term "The Piece of a Hundred Sous."

(Next month Donovan of Downing Street undertakes another hazardous expedition in his capacity as King's Foreign Service Messenger.)

The Clearing Up of Europe.

By Colonel F. N. Maude, C.B.

Colonel F. N. Maude, the author of the following striking article.

No-one as better qualified to write on the subject of the war than Colonel F. N. Maude, C.B. In the following article he throws an interesting light on the European situation and the combined operations of the Allied Forces, as they appeared at the time of going to press (April 12th).

It seems to me that the principal reason for the prevailing depression and public impatience at the apparent condition of stalemate in the several theatres of war arises primarily from the fact that the British Government has never taken the people into its confidence and explained the broad outlines of the military plan to which the Grand Alliance pledged itself and which it has carried out in strictest co-operation ever since.

A Harmful Reticence.

There is no reason why they should have preserved this reticence. The French Government published for popular information last year (in January) a sufficient sketch of our general policy. This has been translated, and until quite recently could be bought at any bookstall for 1s.

Though much has occurred since its publication, the broad design remains the same, and we are very surely nearing the point where the enemy, for want of men, will no longer be able to hold his immensely extended fronts; then his overstrained system will collapse under the heavy blows our armies are ready to rain upon it.

The Outlines of Our Plan.

An illustration as follows will precisely indicate the position. Take the map of Europe, in any 6d. school atlas, and stretch an ordinary indiarubber band round the German and Austrian boundary lines as they existed before the war; pin it down with drawing-pins, and then stretch it to include successively all the territory overrun by the enemy forces. Then imagine insects capable of eating rubber, if such creatures exist, steadily gnawing it—in France, all across Russia, in the Balkans, and so forth—always keeping pace one with the other, so that the band shall snap as nearly as possible simultaneously on every front, and picture how the broken pieces will roll up on their several centres—the drawing-pins.

Something very like this must happen to the German Armies before very many months are over, and the more simultaneously the ruptures occur at the different points of attack, the more catastrophic will be the final destruction.

The groundwork of this plan was laid at the French General Headquarters at a meeting which took place shortly after the failure of the Germans to break our lines at Ypres. Before the war began it was obviously impossible to do more than outline general principles for mutual guidance and support in case of active trouble arising.

Testing Their Mettle.

We could only hastily draw up measures of action, because until we had gained actual experience in war, not only of the many new weapons and devices which all nations were then trying for the first time, but also of our Armies themselves, we could do little else. The latter had undergone profound modifications since last they were tested under fire, and it was not until the end of last December

that each army had discovered what its men could be counted upon to endure.

By that time Russians, French, Belgians, and British knew that as individual fighters they possessed a marked superiority over any men which the Central Powers could put up against them, the one great difficulty being the Allied want of munitions and equipment and of mobilised numbers. It was for this reason that we sent an expedition to the Dardanelles to help the Russians by giving them time to collect, consolidate, and equip their stupendous resources of men.

Those soldiers of our Colonial Dominions and of the United Kingdom who gave their lives at Gallipoli were not wasted, inasmuch as they stood in the gap, so to speak, through which the enemy would have poured to the premature destruction of Russia, and by their heroism and deaths have made it possible for the Allies to conquer the menace of Germany to the peace of the whole world.

When the pick of the German Armies failed altogether to break and roll up the Allied lines either in France or in Poland, it was decided that it was reasonable to assume they would be equally unsuccessful in any future efforts and that where their best had been kept at bay their second-best would be of even less avail.

Organising Our Resources.

The Allies therefore determined it would be perfectly safe to make the French Army (the most numerous and best equipped) their chief bulwark against the enemy, and under cover of its protection they proceeded to organise and develop all their resources of men and material until at length the Allied Armies should stand ready for action in irresistible numbers to meet and overthrow any possible assault.

Needless to say, all that the enemy could reasonably expect to attempt was duly taken into account by the Allied Staffs; also, it was made perfectly clear that a purely passive defence was never contemplated by the members of the Grand Alliance.

They had to keep the enemy constantly busy up and down all the fronts; he was provoked into attacking when and where we, the Allies, chose that he should do so, not allowing him the unfettered exercise of his will as to time and place.

Of course, the methods adopted for carrying out this broad plan varied with the different fronts. On the West we knew we could not afford to risk the loss of more than a couple of hundred yards at a time; on the Eastern line the Russians could only gain in military strength, relatively to the enemy, by retiring as many hundred miles as we did yards in order to gain time. But though in both cases since January, 1915, it has been our policy which has determined the direction in which the enemy attacked, of course we could not directly influence the numbers he chose to employ for that purpose.

Treachery at Home.

But no soldier imagined the difficulties due to disgraceful treachery and greed for money which revolutionary agents, subsidised and instigated by German secret agents in Great Britain, the United States, and Russia, would be able to oppose to the quick organisation of our resources, nor did we know what vast hopes the Germans had built upon the success of those agents and their accomplices, and the effects of their intrigues in Turkey and the Balkans.

Berlin counted absolutely on inciting revolution in Russia when her armies under Hindenburg began their great push towards Riga, and though I do not suggest that the Russians enjoyed the long retreat they were so wise as to make, yet I do insist that the German onslaught before which they bent back, to spring forward again in good time, was the most favourable thing which could have happened at that particular period, for, reverting to the rubber band simile, it strained the German line very nearly to its limit of elasticity.

A Blow Aimed at Britain

By the end of August, 1915, however, the Germans in this sector had "shot their bolt," as Lord Kitchener told us, and having completely failed to bring about any revolutionary demonstrations in Russia, were compelled to attempt their Balkan adventure in the hope that by threatening British interests in particular they might succeed in detaching France, Russia, and Italy from the Alliance, and so leave Great Britain to face the continuation of the war single-handed.

But the chain of the Great Alliance proved to be too firmly welded for this somewhat feeble Machiavellian design to succeed, and the further stretching of the rubber band gave us precisely the opportunity we had all desired.

No sooner were the Central Powers well committed to this new attempt than both French and British struck sharply in Champagne and at Loos; the Russians began to press hard at Bessarabia, and in consequence the whole scheme of redistribution of all the German Armies had to be profoundly modified to meet the threats of the situation thus created.

There was literally no other move left on the military chessboard but to attack us in

the West before our armies were completed, and before the end of the "roadless period" in Russia (which always follows the spring thaw) allowed the Russian Armies to begin their big offensive, and obviously Verdun was the only place for them to strike at.

On this point, therefore, they concentrated everything that could possibly be spared from other areas, and in doing so have played into our hands.

In no other way could they have proved to us that the quality of their troops has sunk so low that in reason their numbers no longer matter.

Germany on the Wane.

When a great army, a quarter of a million strong, fails altogether after repeated efforts to carry the enemy's position by assault, the last hope of victory for their nation has vanished.

Where the German line will first break depends at this moment chiefly on the weather. A dry spring in Russia may give the Tsar's Armies their first chance in the North.

They will attack in overpowering numbers somewhere about Vilna, thrust the Germans northward, and ultimately hunt them into the Baltic, while the great Southern group of Russian forces, reinforced by Roumania, holds the Austro Germans in the Bukhovina, thus leaving the back-door into Austria through Serbia open to the very large gathering of French, British, Italians, and Serbs now waiting either at Salonica or in Albania.

Such an advance will compel the Austrians to retreat towards Vienna and Buda-Pesth, where, at some place on the vast Hungarian plains, will be fought out the decisive battle on which the fate of the Hapsburgs will depend.

Meanwhile, and in proportion to the numbers the Germans are forced to send against the Russians, the great offensive of the Western armies will begin, exactly at what point no one would be allowed to state.

But the essence of the whole question really lies in this—that our present position contains so many strategic possibilities, all of them good enough for our purpose, that it is a mathematical probability of about 80 to 1 against the German Staff making a correct guess as to which particular line we shall eventually take.

The Great Advance.

When we do advance, it will be because the demoralisation of the enemy has been so completely established by observation at the Front that the whole series of combined movements will go forward with an irresistible rush.

Modern weapons, with all their mechanical perfection and potential power, still depend on the nerves of the men who serve them, and the troops least broken by previous punishment can be certain that to them will fall the eventual victory.

It is quite possible, though—it always is on any battlefield—that sudden local Allied successes may break the enemy's line with such completeness that the hour and direction of our advance may be hastened.

Once the break-up of an army through gradual demoralisation begins, no one can say how rapidly events may crowd one on the other.

In the nature of things there is no reason why a beaten German Army should not be driven back on the Rhine within six weeks; the distance thither has often been covered in similar circumstances in the same time, and the passage of the great river itself presents no more formidable difficulties to us than did that of the Danube to the Russians at Rustchuk in 1877, or the crossing of the Vistula to the Germans last spring.

The Final Stand.

How far we may have to fight our way beyond the Rhine into the middle of Germany will depend principally on the progress made by the Russians and Italians towards the meeting of the Allies. My own idea has always been that the Germans will attempt a final stand between Muiden-Paderborn and Hanan, their extreme left resting on the Thuringian Forest, where a great French army moving down the right bank of the Rhine from Basle will work round their flank, while the rest of the Allied forces from the West will press forward on a broad front by all possible roads and river crossings.

Once the Allies have reached Berlin and joined hands, will follow a period of negotiations, during which, as the Germans did before Paris in 1870 for the French, we shall give the enemy facilities to elect a new Government with which we can treat. We know as the crux of the Allied position that we can never make peace with the Kaiser and his satellites, because they are of "them that deal treacherously," and can never again be recognised.

Exactly how long this final stage may take no one can tell with certainty, but from the experience of many former campaigns six months to a year should see the end of the reckoning with "that bitter and hasty nation," who, like the Chaldeans of old, "marched through the breadth of the land to possess the dwelling-places that are not theirs."

THE TEAR.

By Louise Heilgers.

"Never morning wore
To evening, but some heart did break."

In spite of wars, Pierrot in the Extra World still dances. Sometimes when he stands on the rim of his world, looking down into ours, people look up and say:

"How brightly the moon is shining to-night!" But it is only the laughter in Pierrot's eyes they see.

When he is tired of looking down, he goes back and dances with Columbine. Columbine, too, has not altered. Her skirts are just as frilly and white, and roses spring out of the grass round her tiny satin shoes as she whirls and pirouettes, first into the shadows, then into Pierrot's arms. Her eyes are full of flowers, too, all the blue flowers in the world—harebells and forget-me-nots and gentians and pansies—and when she looks at you it is as if you stood in a wood in spring.

People say sometimes when they walk abroad at dusk:

"How sweetly the flowers smell to-night!" But it is only the influence of Columbine.

She and Pierrot together are responsible for all the music and laughter in the world.

They are puzzled sometimes that it takes so long now to make people laugh.

Pierrot goes so close to the edge of his own world at times to lean over and hear for

"There are blue flowers in your eyes, Columbine," he told her, "and your hands smell like roses." (Page 160, col. 1.)

Pierrot . . . put out a finger gingerly and touched a speck of something wet that glistened upon it.
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himself if the bells of mirth are jangling anew in their ears that it is a perfect wonder sometimes he doesn't topple over.

Once, indeed, he leant over so far that his heart jumped out of that baggy white suit of his all powdered over with big black pom-poms, and fell with a thud into the world below.

* * * * *

Somewhere upon the slush-sodden ground a man, who was scarcely more than a boy for all his officer's tunic, lay and waited wearily for the stretcher-bearers. All around him the shadows were deepening, turning the raw amber of the winter's afternoon to violet. Far off a distant gun still grumbled, and the cold lay like a giant's white hand over all the world.

So cold was it that he shivered continuously in spite of the coat with which the pale, grey-haired nurse kneeling beside him had covered him.

It was her own coat, and she was shivering, too. But she, at least, was whole. It wasn't her body that had been torn by shrapnel.

Her eyes—grey, like her hair—were full of pain as she watched the life on his young face ebb into the shadows.

He was only a boy—it seemed such a shame.

But he lay staring at the evening sky as quietly as a child in its cot may lie and watch the stars creep like lamp-lighters out of the dark.

"There's a letter I want you to write, Nurse"—suddenly his eyes were upon her—"if I go out. You'll find the address in my pocket here. It's to a girl, of course." . . .

His dry lips twisted into a short, sharp laugh.

She laughed, too—a pale little ghost of a laugh.

"Of course I'll write," she promised cheerily, "when you're safely tucked up in bed—the men won't be long now—dreaming of her."

"Safely tucked up in bed!"

The boy drew a long breath.

"How splendid that sounds," he said wistfully. Then, with a kind of awe: "And to think I used to kick against going to roost when I was a youngster."

"The men won't be long," she said again.

"If only I wasn't so cold." The boy moved restlessly. "What an infernal nightmare life can be at times."

His voice trailed into dreary silence.

The nurse watched him anxiously. Was it only the night that was making his face so grey?

And then suddenly, as she leant over him, she had a wonderful sensation of something warm and fragrant passing between them. Instinctively she put up her hand as if to grasp at something extraordinarily sweet, but her hand found only cold air.

But when she looked again at the boy it

was to see a wonderful change. It was as if a flame had lit his face. He was transfigured, wonderful. His eyes were upon her, staring as though he were a priest who looked upon Heaven.

When he spoke he said strange things.

"There are blue flowers in your eyes, Columbine," he told her, "and your hands smell like roses."

"Foolish boy!" There were tears in her eyes; then her voice took a sharper note. "Lie still. You will hurt yourself if you move."

But he was struggling to sit up, heedless of her detaining hands.

"I feel so happy," he muttered. "I can't make it out. What a lot I've missed in life."

He held out both hands gropingly.

"Life, why it's all flowers."

His head fell back weakly.

"Soon it will be night," he said after a minute, "and there will be dancing on the moonlit hills. Wait for me, Columbine, if I'm late."

His eyes closed wearily, and then opened and stared at her again.

"Girl—how wonderful you are," he said dreamily.

A chill wind with a hint of rain blew out of the sky, and one or two stars blew away with it, so that they floated like golden sawdust upon the dark. A rain that was more snow began to fall.

Something that was not rain fell on a dead boy's face. And if you tell me it is unofficial for nurses to cry, then I answer you it isn't every nurse with hair made grey by years, and a heart made grey by youth, that is taken for Columbine—Columbine of the spring hair and summer heart.

* * * * *

Pierrot, in the Extra World, studied his returned heart thoughtfully. Presently he put out a finger gingerly and touched a speck of something wet that glistened upon it.

"Why, it's a tear," he said. "Columbine, a tear that has fallen on my heart."

"A tear?" Columbine stared, puzzled. "What's that?"

"Something salt and bitter." Pierrot made a wry face as he put his finger to his lips.

But he was wrong. That particular tear, at least, was sweet. It was made, you see, from the very essence of romance.

CAFÉ MUSINGS.

In museful contentment I tarry
  At ease in this leisurely place,
And sip at the coffee that Carrie
  Has served with ineffable grace.
So charming she is and vivacious,
  She holds me in thrall—but I own
I hardly approve the flirtatious
  Behaviour to which she is prone.

She snares all the café's frequenters
  With numberless feminine wiles,
And on each newcomer who enters
  Bestows indiscriminate smiles.
It really is not at all fitting,
  And gives me unspeakable pain
To see her incessantly flitting
  To flirt with some amorous swain.

Deceiver! in spite of your graces,
  Your vows are as light as your tread,
As frail as the frillings and laces
  That deck your adorable head.
You juggle with hearts that are bleeding,
  And then, as your ardour abates,
You dash them to earth all unheeding,
  As though you were fracturing plates.

My Carrie, you know I adore you:
  The passion that burns in my breast
Consumes me, and so I implore you
  To grant me this humble request:
Most pressing and fervent my suit is—
  Work calls, and my time's nearly up,
So kindly attend to your duties,
  And come and replenish my cup.

C. R. Green.

OUTWARD & VISIBLE SIGNS

By Dorothy Rose.

Oh, bitterness of things too sweet;
Oh, broken singing of the dove!
Love's wings are over fleet,
And like the panther's feet
The feet of love.

The trouble arose because Daphne Kent put him on a pedestal and expected of him more than was in mortal man to give.

For three years Jasper Dawn had inhabited South America, performing feats of railway engineering which no other man would have attempted, let alone achieved.

Daphne had led a dance and tennis party existence, surrounded by sleek-headed youths with pretty manners and a suitable appreciation of bronze-gold hair and appealing brown eyes. Their deference had pleased her, and she had come to expect it as her right. Little things filled her days, assumed undue importance, were to her as the breath of life.

In Jasper's life little things had had no place. He had been so occupied with big schemes, tasks that had taken every ounce of energy he possessed, that many of the small graces had fallen from him. So that when, at the outbreak of war, he had returned with characteristic promptitude to obtain a commission, Daphne's well-ordered world rocked about her, and she was faced with the necessity for revising her standards—a task to which she was thoroughly averse.

Not that Jasper was uncouth—his strong, clean-cut features and level grey eyes held nothing but distinction; his quiet confidence and a certain air of restrained strength marked him out as a man accustomed to command—and to be obeyed.

He was gentle, considerate, but absence from civilisation had made him slack in the embroideries of life. He would have risked his life to save Daphne an hour's pain, but he did not always open the door for her, and was not suitably impressed when she accorded him permission to smoke his beloved pipe.

It was the same in his love-making. Jasper was not demonstrative; his love was so real, so all-pervading, that the necessity for its frequent expression simply did not occur to him. Daphne knew he loved her—the caress in his voice, the touch of his hand, told her that—it never entered his clever, foolish head to prove it by any of the small attentions so dear to the feminine heart. As silent proofs of his love and homage, chocolates and flowers did not exist.

And Daphne resented it. She was not emotional, but she was used to an atmosphere of homage, she expected tribute to her youth and beauty. She tried to persuade herself that Jasper was different, that a man of brain and sinew like him must not be judged by the standard set for his less gifted fellows.

She even wondered if he was disappointed in her, and often stood before the mirror criticising the pale, oval beauty of her face, and the bronze-gold hair that lay in close, silky waves about her graceful head. She chose her most becoming frocks, not that Jasper ever noticed them—that was another grievance—though if she asked for his approval he gave it warmly and ungrudgingly. But it was not spontaneous, and thereby lost most of its charm.

And Jasper, engrossed in his new work and full of enthusiasm for his duties, still found time dimly to realise that all was not well. There was a wistfulness in Daphne's velvety brown eyes, an aloofness in her manner, that puzzled him exceedingly.

The barrier of little things undone, little attentions ungiven, rose imperceptibly between them. And Jasper, whose love wove a golden glory about his days, had not the wit to see that to Daphne, some visible

The box slipped from her grasp and fell to the floor, scattering on the grey carpet a shower of roses, amber and sulphur-yellow!

token, a bunch of roses, a few words of passionate utterance, would have meant more than the certain knowledge—which she had—that he would have died smiling for her sake.

So things stood when Jasper was transferred to another regiment some ten miles away from the country town, on the outskirts of which Daphne and her parents lived. Jasper departed with mixed feelings—sorrow at leaving his little lady-love, and pleasure at his transfer, for the Loyal Lancers was under the command of an old friend, Colonel Wilmot.

He and his wife had been a great deal to Jasper, when, as a young man of twenty-one, he had spent six months near them in a lonely hill station, where "the Colonel's lady," as the young officers affectionately termed her, had been, with her sweet serenity and charming motherliness, as a rose in the desert.

"I want you to know Mrs. Wilmot," Jasper told Daphne, as they sat together amid the dim brown and gold of the library. "She's a perfect dear. Lord! how we all adored her in those grey, monotonous days. She has the biggest heart of any woman I know, and she's so gloriously tolerant and sane."

Daphne nodded absently. Her brown eyes regarded the tip of her green velvet shoe. She had put on her most becoming frock, a myrtle-green taffeta, out of which her pale face rose pure and dainty as a snowdrop beneath the heavy masses of burnished hair. And Jasper had said never a word, though he had looked at her long and lingeringly with his level, inscrutable eyes. She felt rather inclined to dislike Mrs. Wilmot, but, after all, it was Jasper's last evening. She slipped a cool little hand into his, and flushed prettily when, in a moment of unwonted inspiration, he carried it tenderly to his lips.

Daphne missed Jasper more than she expected, despite his casual ways; missed the sense of protection he always gave her, and the comforting sight of his alert, khaki-clad figure. It is possible that left to herself she might have grown to look at things with a broader perspective had not Lieutenant Webster arrived upon the scene in the capacity of billet.

Lieutenant Archie Webster was black-haired and *débonair*, with expressive dark eyes and a trim moustache. A gentleman of leisure, he had made the small courtesies of life his fetish, had perfect taste in chocolates, and a honeyed tongue. It would have needed a girl more versed in wordly wisdom than Daphne to detect the fact that his manners were but a thin veneer cloaking the shallowness of his soul.

His manner to Daphne was unassailable—a perfect blend of the homage and respect due to a girl engaged to another man. He excelled in little attentions, all the parlour tricks in which Jasper was sadly deficient. Daphne

found it very pleasant to be waited on and deferred to, and was prettily grateful when Lieutenant Webster produced cushions for her comfort or hit upon the very chocolates she liked best. Involuntarily she came to compare him with Jasper; her hurt pride flared up anew when she thought of his omissions, and she revelled the more in the newcomer's graceful compliments and finished manners.

The climax came on the night of the regimental dance given by the Loyal Lancers. Jasper was to fetch Daphne, and, her mother not being well, Mrs. Wilmot had readily agreed to chaperon her. They had met several times, and even Daphne had not been proof against the warm-hearted graciousness of "the Colonel's lady." Jasper was bringing his car, while Archie, who was on duty till seven o'clock, was to follow later.

For once Jasper had risen to the occasion, and promised to provide Daphne's flowers. Daphne, slipping into her new chiffon gown of palest hyacinth-blue, heard him arrive and go into the library, and wondered if he had remembered them. He had. A moment later a maid knocked and gave into the girl's hands a large cardboard box.

In delighted anticipation Daphne opened it. Would they be white? Roses, perhaps, or carnations, faintly pink; either would do—she raised the lid and uttered a little cry—the box slipped from her grasp and fell to the floor, scattering on the grey carpet a shower of roses, amber and sulphur-yellow!

Daphne left them where they fell, and an angry flush tinged the whiteness of her skin. Either Jasper had execrable taste or—worse still—he had forgotten the colour of her frock. The girl's red lips set in a hard line as she clicked downstairs in her little silver shoes, and swept tempestuously into the library.

Jasper, standing on the hearth-rug, raised incredulous eyebrows as she put up an impotent hand to ward off his embrace. When he had kissed her: "Well, what is it, little girl?" he asked with an indulgent smile.

"It's the flowers—they're yellow, an awful, hideous yellow!" burst forth Daphne. "And I *told* you my frock was blue!"

"Did you?" Jasper's well-cut lips twitched—she looked so like a spoilt child standing there in her little blue and silver gown. "I'm awfully sorry, Daphne, but we can easily stop at Gunston's on the way and get some more. D'ye know I couldn't for the life of me remember whether you said blue or white."

"That's just it! You couldn't remember. You take so little interest in what I wear that you even forgot the colour of my frock, the frock I described to you only two days ago. You think more of your platoon, your drill, and parade than you do of me. I don't believe the world holds any material but khaki for you at present."

Daphne paused to take breath; her hair gleamed in the amber-shaded light like burnished copper; there were fiery lights in her pansy-brown eyes.

"You're talking nonsense, Daphne." Jasper spoke slowly, filling his pipe with maddening deliberation as he did so. Truth to tell, he was thoroughly taken aback. He could handle a horde of angry men without turning a hair, but this slip of a girl, with the flushed cheeks and accusing eyes, was an altogether different matter. "Because among the myriad things I have to think about I make a slip about your flowers, you accuse me of being indifferent. It's a hard accusation, Daphne."

"It's a true one," she flared, clinging to the table as for support. "You *are* indifferent. You never notice what I wear. I've put on my prettiest frocks and you've never said a word. I might just as well wear a plaid shawl and a flannel petticoat."

"And if I haven't it's because you look sweet in anything," said Jasper. "Whether you wear green plush or pink brocade"—Jasper was totally unversed in modern materials—"you're still Daphne, and that's all I want."

"But that isn't enough!" Daphne stamped her little foot impatiently. Like a bird beating its wings against the bars, she laboured against this masculine dullness and want of perception. "It's the little things that mean so much. You'd die for me, I know, but it wouldn't occur to you to take off my shoes for me when I'm tired," and with this outburst Daphne whisked from the room, leaving her *fiancé* facing a problem far more baffling than any of those he had grappled with in the course of his engineering career.

II.

When Daphne entered the ball-room a cluster of pink carnations nestled against the dim blue of her gown. They were not Jasper's. She had refused imperiously to stop at a florist's that he might make good his mistake, and when Lieutenant Webster, observing her flowerless condition, had procured pink carnations from heaven knew where, she had accepted them instantly, not out of regard for him, but from a wild desire to pierce the armour of Jasper's indifference, to rouse a spark of jealousy in his apparently armour-plate heart.

It was the same reason which prompted

her to give Lieutenant Webster three waltzes and treat him to honeyed words and her most charming smile. He danced perfectly; he gave soothing homage to the blue and silver mystery of her gown, and if the look in his dark, expressive eyes was a trifle over-ardent, his smile a little too confident, he was at least appreciative. Daphne winged a little smile of cool mockery at Jasper as they floated by the doorway where he stood, and laughed outright at the truculent light that leapt to his deep set grey eyes.

The "Colonel's lady," a gracious figure in pearl-grey, saw it, too, and a shadow fell on the sweet serenity of her face. She laid soft fingers on Jasper's arm.

"It's very hot here," she said. "I know a quiet corner, and I want a word with you Jasper."

They found the quiet corner, a palm-shaded nook where "Nights of Gladness" came to them mellowed by distance.

"We are old friends, Jasper," the "Colonel's lady" turned eyes full of sympathy on the lean brown face with the sombre eyes and fighting jaw. "There is something wrong between you and Daphne. Won't you tell an old woman the trouble?"

"If all women were like you, dear lady, this world would be a great deal simpler," burst forth Jasper, leaning back heavily in the protesting wicker chair.

The "Colonel's lady" smiled remembering the days when she, too, had been full of whims and vagaries, days without which she would never have attained to the deep understanding and wholesome sanity which drove all young things to her for help and advice.

"It was a stupid blunder," he confessed, when he had described the scene in the library, "but, after all, if I did forget the colour of her frock, she needn't have been so upset. It's such a little thing."

"A woman's life is made up of little things, Jasper," the "Colonel's lady" reminded him quietly. "You don't realise what it meant to Daphne. An engaged girl chooses her frocks as much for her lover as herself. Daphne had planned that gown for you that she might appear beautiful in your eyes; she had hoped great things, and you disappointed her. You didn't even tell her that hyacinth-blue was her colour, or that her silver slippers were simply charming, did you?"

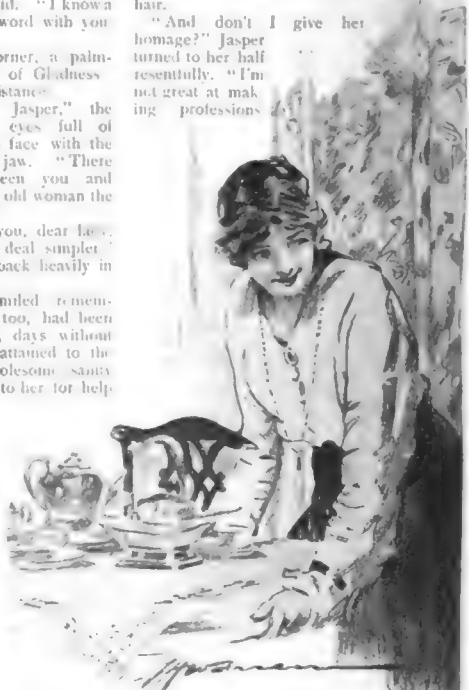
"No!" Jasper leant forward, his hands lightly locked, his brooding eyes fixed on the parquet flooring.

"Well, I don't suppose Lieutenant Webster has been so remiss," remarked his companion tentatively.

"That popinjay!" Jasper's eyes flashed steel. "Daphne would never be deceived by his surface accomplishments. The fellow's got the brains of a cow!"

"Daphne is used to homage, and he gives it to her," said the "Colonel's lady," settling a purple cushion behind her already silvering hair.

"And don't I give her homage?" Jasper turned to her half resentfully. "I'm not great at making professions, but I'd die smiling for her sake. Daphne knows it. Tell me, lady, isn't that enough?"



Daphne rose as the door opened, and Jasper stood—very big and good to look upon—on the threshold.

The "Colonel's lady" shook her head. "I'm older than you, Jasper, and—I've been a girl. Daphne doesn't want you to prove your love once by dying for her; she wants you to prove it every day by little attentions, little appreciative acts and speeches. They are the outward and visible signs that mean so much to a girl. You may not believe it, Jasper, but a bunch of her favourite flowers, a box of her pet chocolates, would mean more to Daphne than your readiness to die a violent death for her sake."

Jasper laughed a trifle bitterly. "Dear lady, do you really mean to imply that a trifle of chocolate and pink ribbon is standing between Daphne and me?" he asked incredulously.

"In a way, yes. Oh, Jasper, can't you understand? A girl—especially a girl like Daphne—wants tangible reminders of the love that is hers. A few, a very few, are content to take it for granted. They're such little things—a word of admiration for a new frock, a cushion tucked behind her when she's tired, a bunch of violets. It's all so incredibly easy. If only you men, with your broader vistas and wider horizons, would realise what a lot it means in the fettered, dependent life of a woman."

The music had stopped. The "Colonel's lady" rose, and laid her fingers on Jasper's arm.

"You've set me thinking," he said. "Thank you from my heart."

The "Colonel's lady" smiled the wise motherly smile before which troubled subalterns and even adjutants invariably threw reserve to the winds. "And remember," she whispered, "a girl will forgive a man many things if he remembers her taste in chocolates. And now go and find Daphne."

But Daphne was not to be found. Jasper's brow clouded as the "Colonel's lady" came to him with the information that Daphne had complained of a headache, and Lieutenant Webster had secured a taxi and taken her home.

"The very best thing that could happen," she told herself as she slipped away to speak to her husband. "Archie Webster never yet shared a taxi with a pretty girl without behaving foolishly. Daphne hates being mauled, and if he kisses her, as he's almost certain to do, his number will be up, and she'll turn instinctively to Jasper."

III.

The "Colonel's lady" was right. Archie, emboldened by Daphne's graciousness, and the champagne he had drunk at supper, kissed her, despite her protests. In the end he managed to make a pretty complete

His bronzed face was set in resolute lines, and in one hand he carried a large white parcel tied up with scarlet cord. [P. 166, col. 1.]

beast of himself, so that Daphne, who had always imagined herself immune from such outbursts, reached home disillusioned and all on edge.

As she brushed out the waves of her burnished hair in the sanctuary of her grey and pink bedroom, Daphne meditated on many things. Chief among them was the fact that, as far as chivalry or respect for womanhood went, Lieutenant Webster's perfect manners meant less than nothing. His well timed attentions, his honeyed speeches, far from indicating true deference, were but a cloak to insult and liberty. She blamed herself bitterly for her folly in wearing his flowers, for giving him three waltzes, and borne on the wave of self-reproach came a desire to atone to Jasper. As she scrubbed with her towel at the cheek defiled by Lieutenant Webster, she saw the little things of life in their true perspective; she felt she could forgive Jasper anything for the sake of his clean, untainted manliness and strength.

Daphne was in a very penitent frame of mind when the next afternoon Jasper was shown up to her own little sanctum, a bright, sun-filled little room, all white paint and rose-patterned chintz. Pink sweet-peas rose out of a green bowl on the piano, and a dainty tea-table was set out invitingly near the Chesterfield.

Daphne rose as the door opened, and Jasper stood—very big and good to look upon—on the threshold. His bronzed face was set in resolute lines, and in one hand he carried a large white parcel tied up with scarlet cord.

"Chocolates!" he said, as he kissed her. "Chocolates with pink insides."

"Glorious! They're my favourites." Daphne stood on tiptoe to kiss him. Her eyes were very bright; her air of aloofness was gone; she was all warmth and pretty graciousness. If she was surprised she did not show it, though when Jasper followed up the presentation by admiring comments on her pink *crêpe-de-Chine* blouse, she permitted herself a lift of the eyebrows.

"Fancy your noticing it!" she said. "Jasper, you're improving. "One lump dear, or two?"

"Three!" Jasper sank down on the Chesterfield beside her. "I know I'm a blundering fellow, sweetheart; I haven't the parlour tricks that come so naturally to men like Archie Webster, but——"

"Don't!" Of a sudden Daphne put down the silver cream jug, her lips quivered, and her hand stole softly into Jasper's. "He's gone," she said. "Oh, Jasper, I must tell you."

With her *fiancé's* arm about her, and her fingers twining themselves round his, Daphne told the story of Lieutenant Webster's fall from grace, while Jasper's lips tightened, and the fighting light glinted steel-like in his eyes.

"The cur!" he said. "I'll undertake to mend his manners."

"He really doesn't matter now," murmured Daphne, rubbing her cheek against his khaki sleeve, as though to wipe out the memory of the hated kiss. "But now your tea's cold; let me give you some fresh," and she resumed command of the teapot.

Jasper watched her in dreamy rapture. In this new, softer mood she was strangely appealing; there was a new womanliness, a touch of the maternal in her ministrations. The soft contour of her face held a new and abiding glory; the happiness of all the ages gleamed in her starry eyes. All Jasper's manhood rose to meet the change in her; before the blossom of her newly-awakened womanhood he felt suddenly exultant and a trifle unworthy.

"Now for the chocolates!" Daphne undid the package, and considered the contents. "Gorgeous fat ones! Oh, Jasper, you *are* a dear!"

Jasper slid an arm about her shoulders, and produced his pipe and pouch. "May I?" he begged with a whimsical smile before which Daphne flushed guiltily.

"Of course you may!" She reached for the matches. "I'll light it for you," she said, and as Jasper leant towards her, he read surrender in the haunting sweetness of her smile.

DO YOU WANT TO WIN A MONEY PRIZE?

If so, turn to Page 193

and enter for our

Great Picture Puzzle Competition.

"WATCH YOUR STEP"

Boots and shoes have never been more varied and attractive than at the present moment. Below are some of the most fascinating examples, the originals of which were worn by that clever and charming young actress, Miss Dorothy Minto.

These bedroom slippers are made of brocade and finished off with a tiny ruching.

Black velvet boots are the last word in elegance, and are as comfortable as they are becoming.

Nothing is more effective for evening wear than slippers of brocade. The brocades are made in a wide range of colours and beautifully interwoven with gold.

A very smart pair of boots in patent leather with tops of beige antelope. The side-lacing is a very up-to-date touch.

Patent leather is used for these pretty shoes, with their crossed straps. Given silk stocking and a dainty pair of feet, what could be more effective?

Very charming slippers are those made of plain black satin, with a single strap.

Patent leather pumps are always attractive. Here is a pair which would be a welcome addition to any lady's wardrobe.

Photo Ellis Neame.

Black patent leather and antelope in grey or beige are combined to form these walking shoes, which are fastened with long silk laces to match.

Boots and Shoes kindly lent by Messrs. Pinet, 17 New Bond Street, W.

Photos Flora Nunn.

Boots are greatly in favour to wear with the short skirts of the moment, and for comfort and smartness it would be hard to beat these of black leather, with cloth tops in various colourings.

CAP AND BELLS

SMITING THE SHEPHERD.

An inspector visiting a provincial school was much worried by the noise of the scholars in the next room. At last, unable to bear it any longer, he opened the door and burst in upon the class.

Seeing one boy, rather taller than the others, talking a great deal, he caught him by the collar, carried him to another room, and banged him into a chair, saying:

"Now, sit there and be quiet!"

A quarter-of-an-hour later a small head appeared round the door, and a meek little voice said:

"Please, sir, you've got our teacher!"

* * * * *

UNHAPPILY PUT.

HOST: "It's beginning to rain. You'd better stay to dinner."

GUEST: "Oh, thanks very much, but it's not bad enough for that."

* * * * *

THOROUGHLY COMPETENT.

The wife of the wealthy manufacturer had occasion to call in the help of a new floor polisher.

"Do you understand your business thoroughly?" she asked.

"All I ask, madam, is that you shall inquire at my last situation. On the floor of the large drawing-room alone five persons broke their limbs during the last winter, and a lady slipped down the grand staircase. It was I who polished the floor and stairs."

* * * * *

A BIG REPERTOIRE.

A boxing professor was giving his pupil a few tips, and suddenly gave him a knock-down blow.

PUPIL: "Is it necessary to knock me down like that?"

PROFESSOR: "Bless yer, no, guv'nor Get up and I'll show yer ten other ways."

THE CANAL BOAT.

All day the boats go sailin'
Along this 'ere canal,
An' some is pretty boats an' some is not—
But the smartest of the lot of 'em
(To my mind, anyway,)
Is this old barge o' mine—the "Flying Scot."

'Er brass is fairly dazzlin'
A-glitterin' in the sun,
While 'er paintwork it's a pleasure to be'old!
Green an' red's the scheme o' colour,
Dotted 'ere an' there wi' blue,
For wi' gaudy-lookin' boats I doesn't 'old.

The cabin, it's as cosy
(Though not so big, maybe,)
As the finest palace built for any queen—
An' Dobbin, on the tow-path,
'E's proud to pull along
A boat like this, what's allus neat an' clean.

There's only one thing wantin'
Aboard the "Flying Scot"—
An' that's a missis, just to keep things straight.
So I'm lookin' out for someone
Who'll likely not say "No,"
When I asks 'er if she'll ship with me as Mate!

F. Mabel Dean.

GERMAN BUMBLE BEE: "Now for de Iron Cross! Here a munitions factory evidently is."

SPEAK! SPEAK!

Little Faith was possessed of a most friendly disposition, but had not reached the age when she could understand the silence that may wrap itself around a wordless intimacy. In fact, she demanded speech, frequent and loving.

One night her brother was studying his arithmetic lesson most assiduously, and after calling to him several times without receiving an answer, she appealed to her father.

"George is busy," said father.

"I know," replied Faith, "but he might at least have said, 'Shut up.'"

* * *

PAID IN FULL.

The one was English and the other Scottish. Travelling together, they had indulged in a game of cards to while away the time, and on parting company the Caledonian was the winner by 1s 6½d.

The Englishman paid up 1s 6d., but found he had no coppers for the odd halfpenny.

"Weel, weel," said Scotty; "never mind. I'll just be takin' yer evenin' paper."

* * *

PENCIL OR PUNTING-POLE?

Why is it that the tall, stout officer always carries a stick like a pencil, while his slighter comrade favours one as big as a punting-pole?

EUCLID IN THE ARMY.

A dug-out is that which, if inhabited by any number of men, contains room for less than half that number.

Trenches may be constructed from any point to any other point, and are never used in a dry condition.

Communication trenches are such that, if an orderly with the day's rum ration enter at the end remote from his company, he is enabled to reach that company by the shortest possible route.

All regimental sergeant-majors are equal to anything, but the side of any two sergeant-majors taken together is less than that of any three brigadier-generals taken at random.

An adjutant is that which hath no heart or gratitude.

A bee-line is always made from any canteen to any other canteen.

No man having only one stripe may receive pay above that of a lance-corporal. If a man receives no pay for his stripe, then will he be an unpaid lance-corporal, which is most absurd.

Any two whizzbangs together will cause a newcomer to duck.

All Swedish drill-instructors get a man on his hands and toes and up again in the shortest possible time. If they did not, then they would take longer, which is unlikely.

Any number of Army biscuits are together worth less than one sound tooth.

Gum boots, thigh, may be of such size as to encumber a bantam up to and over his waist, but no higher, otherwise they would chafe his armpits. Their size should be so regulated that no periscope is necessary.

To describe a route march with any training centre and with any distance as radius, take a certain number of men with blistered feet, and let them lie on the grass at a distance of one mile from that training centre.

A major has the shortest temper between two meals.

A medical orderly is a private capable of running to the M.O.'s dug-out for help by the most direct route, but only in the case of minor injuries.

No man may wear more than one gas-helmet on one and the same head.

Duties are bounded at both ends by rations; that is to say, when the quartermaster knows his job. In all other cases, which are many, grousing occupies the same space.

Five-franc notes are such that, although presented in payment for a glass of beer at any number of *estaminets*, or produced any number of times, they can never be changed.

The S.M.O. of a Division is an officer, and is such that he should never be called out of bed at 3 a.m. to see a man with a stiff toe.

Sergeants who swear in the same manner are equal to one another.

ALWAYS USEFUL.

VISITOR: "My name is Scrawler. I sent you several contributions. Is there anything among them you can use?"

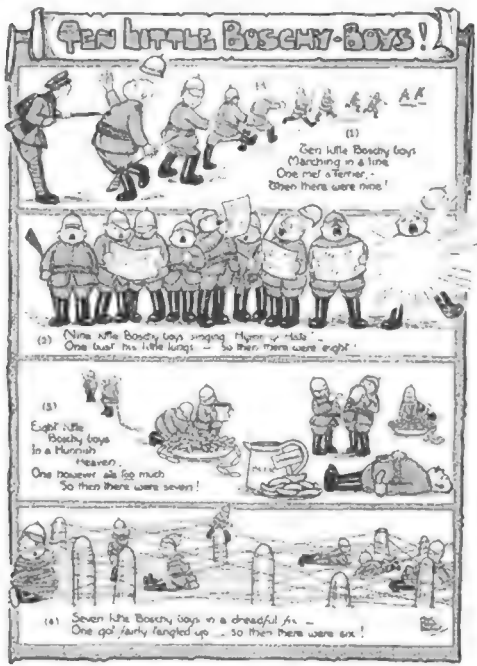
EDITOR: "Yes, the postage stamps."

* * * * *

GUESS!

VISITOR (to artist's young wife): "Whatever were you two laughing over just now?"

WIFE: "Oh, it was such fun! My husband painted and I cooked, and then we both guessed what the things were meant for."


Ten little Boschy-Boys!
(1) Ten little Boschy boys Marching in a line One met a terrier, Then there were nine!
(2) Nine little Boschy boys singing Hymns of Hate One beat his little lungs — So then there were eight!
(3) Eight little Boschy boys In a Hunnish Heaven. One however ate too much So then there were seven!
(4) Seven little Boschy boys in a dreadful fix — One got fairly fangled up — So then there were six!

FATAL SUSPENSE.

"I wonder whether hanging is a painful death? Some people say it isn't."

"It must be. Doesn't everybody say that there's nothing so painful as suspense?"

* * * * *

A SERIOUS MATTER.

"This boy," said the proud mother to a neighbour, "certainly grows more like his father every day."

And the neighbour, knowing the father, inquired anxiously:

"Does he, though? And have you tried everything?"

MUCH ATTACHED.

A little girl, whose parents had recently moved from country to town, and who was enjoying her first experience of living in a street, thus described it in a letter to another child:

"This is a very queer place. Next door is fastened on our house."

* * * * *

NEARLY EXTINGUISHED.

She was very stout, and must have weighed nearly fourteen stone. She was learning roller skating, when she had the misfortune to fall. Several attendants rushed to her side, but were unable to raise her at once. One said soothingly:

"We'll get you up all right, madam. Do not be alarmed."

"Oh, I'm not alarmed at all, but your floor is so terribly lumpy."

And then from underneath came a small voice which said: "I'm not a lump; I'm an attendant."

* * *

A DOUBLE EVENT.

It was at a birthday banquet given the other evening by a prominent millionaire banker. The fun was at its height, when a lady cried out:

"My pearl necklace has disappeared!"

Uproar followed, while everyone suggested plans for its recovery.

Then the banker had a brilliant idea.

"We will place a salver in the middle of the room," he said; "lights will be extinguished, and the perpetrator of this silly joke will have an opportunity of restoring the missing necklace."

This was done.

Then the lights were turned on again and there was more consternation. The salver had disappeared!

* * *

NO HALF MEASURES.

BLUNT PARENT: "Now, sir, what do you want?"

SUITOR: "Your daughter's hand."

BLUNT PARENT: "Can't have it. You must take her as a whole or leave her. We don't do business here on the instalment principle."

* * * * *

PLENTY OF SPRING.

The Browns were at dinner. The second course was brought on, and there was a period of silence, broken only by the sound of knife and fork. Then Brown looked up.

"What is this?" he asked, pointing to the joint.

"The butcher said it was spring lamb," replied Mrs. Brown.

"Umph!" grunted Brown; "the butcher was right. I've been chewing one of the springs for the last five minutes."

A FIXTURE.

DOCTOR (to Gilbert, aged four years): "Put out your tongue, my boy."

Little Gilbert feebly protruded the tip of his tongue.

DOCTOR: "No, no; put it right out."

The little fellow shook his head weakly, and the tears gathered in his eyes.

"I can't, doctor; it's fastened on to me."

* * * * *

A MOVING EXPLANATION.

"It is to the pioneers of good movements that the credit and honour belong, not to the followers," said a lecturer in a Highland village.

At the conclusion of his lecture he was warmly greeted by an old lady, who thanked him for speaking so kindly of her son Donald.

"But I think you have made a mistake," replied the lecturer. "I don't know your son, and I'm not aware that I mentioned him to-night."

"Yes, yes!" said the old lady. "Donald is one of those pioneers of big movements."

"Oh, I see!" replied the lecturer. "What is your son, madam?"

"What is Donald?" said the proud mother, in a surprised tone. "Why, Donald walks in front of a steam-roller with a red flag."

* * *

NOT A CLEAN RECORD.

While the agent was talking to the head of the house at a country farm, the friend at the gate held his horse, and a conversation took place with the grubby small boy of the family.

"Are you sure you are only nine years old?" asked the visitor. "I think there must be some mistake."

The boy was positive. "What made you think I was more than nine years old?" he said.

"Why," said the stranger, "I couldn't understand how you could get so dirty in nine years."

* * *

THE GUILTY PARTY.

Mamie had been naughty, and her mother finally had recourse to the time-honoured remedy in such cases.

"Mamma," she sobbed, "did gran'ma spank you when you was little?"

"Yes, dear," said her mother; "she did when I was naughty."

"And did her mother spank her?"

"Yes."

"An' was she spanked, too, when she was naughty?"

"Yes."

"Well, who started this stupid business, anyhow?"

NATIONALITY UNKNOWN.

"Norah," said the mistress, "are these French sardines that you have given me?"

"Shure, Oi don't know, ma'am," said the new maid; "they were past spakin' whin I opened the tin."

* * * * *

POOR COMPANY!

"May we have the pleasure of your company this evening, colonel?" she asked.

The colonel drew himself up haughtily, and replied with every evidence of offended dignity:

"Madam, I command a battalion."

(5) Six little Boschy boys went to rob a bee, —
One of them got badly stung, so then there were five.
(6) Five little Boschy boys, with medicine upon trial,
One could not carry his, so then there were four!
(7) Four little Boschy boys
Playing by the Sea, —
One (mercifully) ventured out
Then there were three!
(8) Three little Wonky boys
Wondering what to do, —
One was run over by a cow
Then there were two.
(9) Two little Boschy boys
Playing with a gun
If went off unexpectedly, —
So then there was one!
(10) One little Boschy boy left all alone
(She thinks he fell on his head a bonk)
So now there are none!

RANK!

FRIEND: "What do you think of that cigar I gave you?"

TROOPER: "There's something about it that is suggestive of a general."

FRIEND: "What is that?"

TROOPER: "It's rank."

* * * * *

A LAPSE OF MEMORY.

HE: "You know, Maggie, how I love you and admire you. Will you be mine?"

SHE: "Why, you asked me that a week ago, and I refused you."

HE: "Oh, was it you?"

A HOPEFUL SIGN.

YOUNG WIFE: "I think cook is improving, don't you?"

HUSBAND: "Why, at dinner to-night everything but the black coffee was horrible."

YOUNG WIFE: "I know. But that's usually bad too."

* * * * *

VERY TART!

The editor of the woman's page was on his vacation, and the sporting editor had stepped into the breach.

"Well, what do you think of this?" he snorted, as he held up a perfumed note. "Here's a silly woman wants to know how to make a lemon tart! As though a lemon wasn't tart enough already!"

PRIVATE VIEWS.

"Would you like some views of the hotel to send to your friends?"

"Sir," said the discontented guest, "I think it will be better for me to keep my views to myself."

* * * * *

THEY COULD NOT PART.

A rash Irishman had climbed up a tree in pursuit of a wild cat. His friend, waiting down below, heard in dismay the uproar of a fierce combat

"Pat," he shouted, "Pat, shall I come up and help you catch him?"

Above the crash of breaking branches came the groan:

"No; but for Hiven's sake came up and help me let him go!"

AUGUSTUS (entertaining visitor till mother appears): "If you were not a clergyman, what would you like to be?"

VICAR (trying to talk down to the boy): "I sometimes think I should like to be a pirate."

AUGUSTUS: "Oh, I was referring more particularly to the sedentary occupations."

PATIENCE DIDN'T PAY.

"Everything comes to him who waits, I suppose," said the restaurant diner patiently.

"Yes, sir," answered the waiter; "but the gentlemen that won't wait get theirs first."

* * * * *

NOT WISELY, BUT TOO WELL.

Willie, aged four, came to his mother and in great ecstasy exclaimed:

"Oh, mother! Ethel and Charlie finded such a nice dead cat, an' they're goin' to have a funeral, an' can I go?"

Permission was given, and when Willie returned he was questioned as to the outcome of the funeral

"They never had it at all."

"And why not?"

"Because the cat was too dead."

THE COMPANY'S PROPERTY.

"Here," the railway official shouted, "what do you mean by throwing those trunks about like that?"

The porter gasped in astonishment.

Then the official spoke again: "Don't you see that you're making big dents in this concrete platform?" he said.

* * * * *

TOUGH 'UNS.

"Listen to this, Maria," said Mr. Stubb, as he unfolded his scientific paper. "This article states that in some of the old Roman prisons that have been unearthed they found the petrified remains of the prisoners."

"Gracious, John," exclaimed Mrs. Stubb, with a smile, "them's what they call hardened criminals I expect."

A RISE IN EGGS.

1. Mr. Longbeak sat on his wife's eggs during her absence, but at the end of two weeks they showed no signs of hatching.

DISTINCTION WITH A DIFFERENCE.

GERMAN PROFESSOR OF LANGUAGES: "What is the difference between Kaiser (Emperor) and *Käse* (cheese)?"

ENGLISH STUDENT (reflectively): "The Kaiser walks, high and mighty; the *Käse* is mitey, high, and walks."

• • • • •

MAKING SURE!

A drill-sergeant was drilling the recruit squad in the use of the rifle. Everything went smoothly until blank cartridges were distributed. The recruits were instructed to load their pieces and stand at the "ready," and then the sergeant gave the command: "Fire at will."

Private Lunn was puzzled. He lowered his gun. "Which one is Will?" he asked.

• •

VARIETY.

JANE: "It was as much as I could do to keep from laughing when Miss Lovely remarked that her *fiancé* was 'so versatile.'"

BILLY: "You mean Dumley? Well, he is rather versatile."

JANE: "Nonsense! He's a regular idiot."

BILLY: "Yes; but he's so many different kinds of an idiot."

• • • • •

TOO GREAT A RISK.

Little Arthur stood peering down at his baby sister, whom the nurse was singing to sleep.

"Nursie," he whispered finally, "she's nearly unconscious, isn't she?"

The nurse nodded in the affirmative, and sang on.

"Then don't sing any more, or you'll kill her."

• • • •

REACHING THE LIMIT.

"Did you tell that young man not to call here any more?" asked Mabel's father severely.

"N—no."

"Why not?"

"I didn't think it was necessary. I don't see how he could call here any more. He calls seven times a week now."

2. Persuaded by his friend, Mr. Humpy, he went to the Oasis Hotel. While there they heard an explosion.

FOR BETTER OR WORSE.

The maiden wore an anxious look,
Her mind was not at rest,
She pondered deeply for a while,
And really seemed distressed.

The time was passing quickly by,
She still remained in doubt;
The matter made her quite perplexed,
And needed thinking out.

"Shall it be 'Yes' or 'No'?" she cried
"The ordeal must be faced."
At last she took the medicine,
And swallowed it in haste.

Dorothy Harrison.

• • • •

A WEIGHTY PROBLEM.

WEARY TRAVELLER (at railway station on a Kentish line): "Is there a cemetery here?"

PORTER: "No, sir."

WEARY TRAVELLER: "Then where do you bury the people who die while waiting for trains?"

• • • • •

A BACK ANSWER.

A gentleman once bought his six-year-old son a donkey to amuse himself with. The little fellow got on all right with it at first, but one day he came into the house crying.

"What's the matter now?" asked his father; "you've not been teasing the donkey, have you?"

"No," sobbed the small boy: "I was only trying to cut my name on its back, and it kicked me."

• •

THE VITAL POINT.

WIFE: "I notice your coat on the hall-stand this morning is covered with mud."

HUSBAND: "Yes, it dropped into the gutter as I was coming home last night."

WIFE: "And were you in it?"

• • • • •

PAST RECALL.

MISTRESS: "Why is dinner not ready, Bridget? Didn't I tell you to cook it in the gas stove?"

BRIDGET: "Plaze, mum, yes, and I did thry, but th' stove wint out."

MISTRESS: "Why didn't you light it again after it went out?"

"Well, mum, it's not come back yit. It wint out through the window."

3. "Zeppelins!" they exclaimed. But Mrs. Longbeak, returning, discovered the real cause of the disturbance.

For "Soldiers and Sailors Too"

All the contributions on this page were sent in by officers and men serving in H.M. Forces. A pack of ROYAL playing-cards or a silver pencil-case is given for every accepted storyette, joke, bit of verse, or drawing sent in by a sailor or soldier. Please say which gift you prefer, and address envelopes to The O.C., ROYAL MAGAZINE, 18 Henrietta Street, London, W.C.

ATTENTION!

A recruit was up before the Regimental Court for overstaying his leave.

THE COLONEL: "You are charged with being absent from camp after 'Lights Out' had sounded. Have you anything to say for yourself?"

RECRUIT: "Well, sir, it was this way. I was running to catch the last train from town, and was just about to step in when a band started to play 'God Save the King'; so I stood to attention, and when the band had finished the train was gone."

He was let off with a warning.

POOR ARMIES.

FIRST PRIVATE (reading an article in Sunday paper): "I would pour armies into the Balkans, I would pour armies into Mesopotamia, Egypt——"

SECOND PRIVATE (interrupting): "Poor armies!"

B.C. 87.

Two British soldiers, who had lived in the country all their lives, were home for a few days' leave, during which time they made up their minds to go to London. They went into the British Museum, where they saw a mummy, over which hung a card on which was printed "B.C. 87."

They were mystified, and one said to his chum: "What do you make of that, Jack?"

"Well," said Jack, "I should say it was the number of the motor-car that killed him."

A NEAR SHAVE.

OFFICER: "Why have you not shaved this morning, Jones?"

JONES: "I beg your pardon, sir; there were so many shaving before the same glass, I must have shaved the wrong face."

THEIR ONLY FAULT.

Patrick was apparently an all-round hand, and although he had enlisted as a rifleman, when the sergeant asked for men who could work with horses he was a willing volunteer.

"Can you drive a team, Pat?" asked the sergeant.

"Shure, if it's just one hoss," Pat replied.

"Well, no, it's not one horse, there are six; but you shall have two drivers under you."

The following day Pat was accosted by the sergeant.

"Well, Pat," he said, "and how are you getting along with the horses?"

"Shure, now, an' I'm gettin' on fine, but the beasts won't keep step."

SIMPLY IGNORANCE.

OFFICER (inspecting dinners): "Any complaints?"

COOK'S MATE: "Yes, sir, the spuds is bad."

OFFICER (to Orderly Sergeant): "What does he mean, Sergeant?"

ORDERLY SERGEANT (late of Devonshire): "The man's hignorant, sir; he means 'taties."

ACCOUNTED FOR.

The old sergeant was out with the new squad of recruits on musketry, range-finding, etc. Pointing out a large house and giving the range, he asked if any of them could pick out any details about the house.

"Yes, sergeant," answered one. "There's a small well in the garden, some bricks in a heap, and a bird-cage in the front window."

"Well," said the sergeant, "you have remarkable eyesight. What's your name and number? How is it you can see so well at such a distance?"

"Oh," replied the new recruit, "that's where I'm billeted, sergeant."

PICTURE PARAGRAPHS

The Editor will be Pleased to Purchase Photographs of an Interesting and Out-of-the-Way Nature. All Photographs should be Accompanied by a Short Description.

FUTURE JACK TARS.

GYMNASTICS play an important part in the curriculum of the 300 boys who are being trained for the Navy at the Naval Training School at Elmham, in Norfolk.

The school has already sent a good number of boys into the Fleet since the war began, and there are plenty more promising youngsters who will soon be ready for a life afloat.

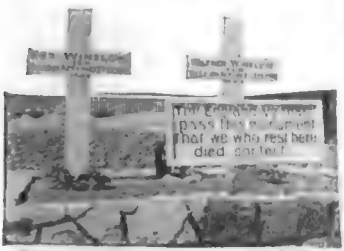
KILLED IN ACTION.

THESE two graves mark the resting-place of two gallant soldiers who fell in the German South-West African desert.

The Imperial Light Horse were engaged in a cavalry patrol, when they suddenly came under heavy fire from a concealed party of the enemy.

One of the first men to fall was Rex Winslow, his charger being hit at the same time. His younger brother, who was riding near, dismounted and ran to help the fallen man, when he, too, was shot.

Both brothers were dead when picked up. The wounded horse belonging to Rex Winslow was sent to a veterinary hospital, and subsequently presented to the mother of the gallant soldiers in Johannesburg.



The last resting-place of two brothers, members of the Imperial Light Horse, who fell in German South-West Africa.

Here are a few of the boys who are being trained for the Navy at the Naval Training School in Norfolk.

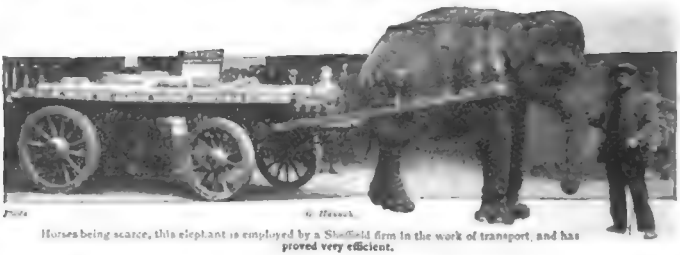


Photo G. Hassall.

Horses being scarce, this elephant is employed by a Sheffield firm in the work of transport, and has proved very efficient.

Photo Levick, New York.

Aqua-planing is an exciting sport indulged in by American water-nymphs who can borrow a motor-boat to tow them.

JUMBO TO THE RESCUE.

Now that horses are so scarce the difficulty of transport is very great, and at least one enterprising firm has solved the question by employing an elephant to do the necessary work.

This particular elephant rejoices in the name of Lizzie, and is employed by a Sheffield firm engaged on war work, so that she is unconsciously doing her bit towards winning the war.

Lizzie is twenty-eight years old, and turns the scale at 2 tons 8 cwt. She is very strong, and can pull a load of 8 tons at the rate of six to eight miles an hour.

People in Sheffield are quite used to seeing Lizzie parading the streets, and she is a picturesque addition to the traffic of that town. Apparently she does not resent the harness, but takes kindly to her new work.

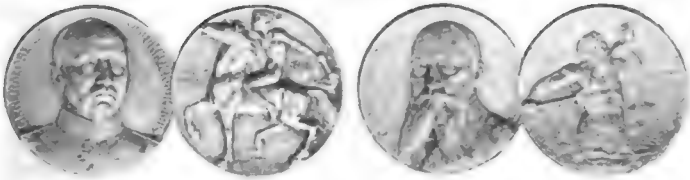
A JOY-RIDE BY WATER.

AQUA-PLANING is a sport indulged in by some of the more adventurous spirits at certain American seaside resorts, but is not recommended to non-swimmers, as the element of danger is by no means lacking.

The two chief necessities are a wooden platform and a motor-boat. The aqua-planist stands on the platform gripping a rope fixed to the two front corners, and is taken in tow by the motor-boat. Then the fun begins, and as long as the rope holds and the damsel keeps her balance, it is very fine sport indeed.

Certainly the sensation of dashing through the water can leave nothing to be desired in the way of exhilaration. Whether it will ever become popular at our English seaside resorts is doubtful, since motor-boats are not always to be had for the asking.

Seaside boatmen are conservative beings, and would probably consider it an indignity to hire out their craft for such purposes, so that, failing a private motor-boat, there seems little hope for the would-be water-nymph.



Photos *Underwood & Underwood.*

These medals, sacred to Von Kluck and Von Tirpitz, were struck in readiness to celebrate the capture of Paris and the sinking of the British Fleet. It is reasonably certain that they will never be wanted.

MEDALS THAT WON'T BE WANTED.

No one can accuse the Germans of want of forethought in their plans, but sometimes their passion for looking ahead is singularly misplaced.

This was especially the case when medals were ordered to be struck to commemorate the capture of Paris and the sinking of the British Fleet. The medals were dedicated respectively to Von Kluck and Von Tirpitz, and were made of silver, and widely circulated in Germany and Austria.

It certainly seems as if the silver might have been put to a better use, since the coveted victories are never likely to take place.

A TREE ON CRUTCHES.

Photo *Underwood & Underwood.*

Over a dozen poles are used to support this famous old oak tree near the city of Gloucester.

THE "Lassington Oak" is a famous old tree near the city of Gloucester. It is several centuries old, and although showing signs of decay, still puts forth buds and leaves almost as vigorously as its younger brothers.

Owing to its great age, it has been found necessary to give the oak some support, and with the help of its dozen or more props the tree has withstood all the gales of winter.

GOING HALVES.

THERE would not seem to be much in common between a kitten and a ferret, but this happy pair are great pals. They sleep together and share their food and drink in the most amicable fashion. The kitten was a stray, but the latter gave her a cordial welcome.

Photo *H. Burch.*

This kitten and ferret are devoted friends, share their meals and are the best of playfellows.

WOMEN AND LOVE

By Frank St. Austell.

A month or two ago Mr. Frank St. Austell wrote an article called "Do Women *Really* Fall in Love?" concluding finally that they don't. Correspondence has poured in both for and against his conclusion. I have allowed Mr. St. Austell these two pages in which to quote from both sides.—[Ed. R.M.

"Hell holds no fury like a woman scorned," somebody says somewhere. Not that I ever intended to scorn a woman, or women; I would rather be preached to death by wild curates. But some of my fair readers have hit me rather hard. However, I bear them no grudge.

Incidentally the opinions expressed by correspondents work out at exactly three to one against me. I bow to the majority. I am quenched.

Let me give my adversaries the first innings, since they are many. "An Heiress" considers women have more consideration for others in matters of love than men, and that is why they seem colder. She writes:

It is true a man's love may be more passionate, madder, and stronger at the time, but it is also more selfish, for he only knows he wishes to marry a certain girl; he does not pause to think what effect it may have on his parents, or the future. His love is not open to reason, and so he dashes headlong into marriage with a chorus girl, or barmaid, or anyone hopelessly beneath him in class he happens to fancy at the moment, in a way a girl would not blindly elope with a chauffeur or a footman.

But why is this?

Not because the girl is too selfish to sacrifice her position so completely, but because she is not attracted by men of a lower class. The gulf is much wider and deeper between them: she has been brought up surrounded by menservants and taught they are a different species till she fails to notice they exist, whereas a boy fresh from school, unused to feminine society, getting into cheerful company and meeting the prettiest of chorus girls as a novelty, is completely carried off his feet. He sees only the pretty face or figure, and hopes to raise the girl he insists on marrying to his own class, and probably has the money to do so, whereas a girl knows it would mean leaving her own class for ever, reaping dire curses from her parents, who would cut her off without a penny, whilst her friends would never speak to her again.

With the brief observation that girls have been known to marry men below them in social position, I pass on to the comments of Miss V. R.:

"No man," she contends, "has any right to write such an article" (as mine). "What does a man know about a woman's heart?"

A woman *needs* that "saving common sense" that is often put down to mercenary instincts. A woman, when she marries, gives up a great deal more than a man; it's a greater change to her, and she needs all her common sense, and very often far more than she possesses. It's a great pity more women don't have it: there would be fewer miserable lives. She cannot be too careful about the choice of the man to whom she is to tie herself. She needs to go slow, and to THINK SERIOUSLY, and weigh up everything. And, in my opinion, TOO FEW women do it. . . .

A man often marries because he sees a good chance of getting a reliable housekeeper or a cheap general servant who won't give a week's notice. Man is ALWAYS selfish, however good he is—far more selfish than woman, and he is very capable of taking care of himself—in love affairs as well as in other affairs. . . .

I am not keen on marriage for myself, although I don't go about shouting that I shall never, never marry! To do that would be foolish, for I might, after all, and then people would have the laugh out of me. I have seen far too many unhappy marriages, but I am old-fashioned enough thoroughly to believe that marriage is woman's true vocation—if she gets the right man. So very few do.

Never mind; it is better to speak out and clear the air. I pass along to the words of "Americus," who is a soldier, and starts his letter by saying frankly: "Personally, I think the author is absolutely

wrong in most of his views." I agree cordially with "Americus" when he adds, in proof, that women are unselfish:

> How many young women are waiting at home for their boys at the Front, and who, unless these boys come back, will never marry, and how many men are there that are trusting their sweethearts at home because they believe in the power of a woman's love? Surely there is nothing mercenary about these girls. They, perhaps, will lose everything by their promise to marry these boys, who may come home maimed and possibly helpless by their long campaign in France and Belgium. Surely, most of these men will have no fortune to give anyone who may marry them!

J. T., writing from Scotland, falls foul of my logic. He says I based my argument on the fallacy that love is blind. I don't know that I did, but, if so, mythology is with me, for is not Cupid always portrayed as a blind god? J. T. goes on to say:

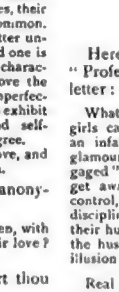
> The great characteristic of love is the cession of one's whole being to the loved one. From the first moment of mutual love, their lives, their hopes, their ambitions are held in common. Love involves sacrifice, utter unselfishness where the loved one is concerned. That perfect examples of these characteristics are rarely found is not to disprove the existence of love in women, but merely its imperfection; but, as a matter of actual fact, women do exhibit those symptoms of self-abandonment and self-sacrifice on love's altar to a very marked degree.
>
> Women love because they are made to love, and this is even truer of women than it is of men.

"Araminta," who, alas! wrote anonymously, raises an interesting point:

> In Shakespeare's plays are not his women, with hardly an exception, true and sincere in their love? But of which of his men can this be said?
>
> "Oh, Romeo, Romeo, wherefore art thou Romeo!"

M. S. H. blames men entirely for women's attitude towards love:

> This is an age of variety. The modern man likes change—he cannot be content with the love of *one* faithful woman; he pines for the admiration and adulation of *numerous* women, married or single! He is undoubtedly bored when it comes to being definitely engaged to one particular specimen of the fair sex!
>
> Is it, then, to be wondered at that certain women deem it necessary to choose their husbands with extreme caution, regarding them from a practical as well as an emotional standpoint?



Lastly I come to a couple of my admirers, to whom I extend sincere gratitude. One, I am proud to say, signs herself, "A Reader in her Green Romantic Teens." Weigh her words carefully, please:

> I think the author has arrived at some remarkable truths about the modern maiden. Now that such truths are out—printed in a very popular magazine for thousands of individuals to read—I suppose it is really quite useless to try to deny them. I think that, generally speaking, the girl of to-day does not really fall in love: she keeps a definite object in view, always weighing the *pros* and *cons* of the affair. Nevertheless it pleases her to tell herself often (so often that she comes to believe it) that she is head over heels in love, and not the least bit calculating. But at the bottom of her heart there is the truth which the author has somehow discovered.

"Professor Tinsie" has done more than accompany me along the road. It may be said of this correspondent's attitude to me, in the immortal words of Lewis Carroll:

> "He left him dead,
> And, miles ahead,
> He went galumphing back."

Here is the pith of "Professor Tinsie's" letter:

> What the majority of girls call love is simply an infatuation with the glamour of "being engaged" thrown in—to get away from parental control, where there is more or less discipline, which discipline they resent, and when "mated," round on their husbands if all their wishes are not gratified—the husband's eyes eventually being opened by the illusion of real love in girls!

Real love presupposes Sacrifice; the present-day girls have never learnt its true Divine meaning. But you say, "See how they have come forward during the present war." True; but, after all, it is in their own interest, preferring British freedom to German thraldom. They remember Belgium.

In conclusion, may I thank the many readers, quoted and unquoted, who have been sufficiently interested to write?

SPRING SPEAKS AGAIN.

By F. E. Baily.

Mary was an independent person who loved her freedom, but even she was not proof against the subtle magic of spring in South Cornwall, and the impetuous wooing of the Navy. How she made unconditional surrender is charmingly told in the following story.

I.

It was 8 a.m. of a perfect spring morning. Mary Gray, clad in the filmiest of pink silk nighties, lay amid her small, white bed in the pink and white bedroom of the most adorable little flat in Portland Place and gulped from that sheer, breathless agony with which spring afflicts refined, sensitive natures. Upon a bedside table reposed early morning tea, fragrant and refreshing in egg-shell china. In her palpitating left hand she held "Ballads of Bébé-Ribbon," perhaps the *chef d'œuvre* of the irrepressible "François," that exhilarating, anonymous poet who has managed to capture the spirit, so elusive, of the modern girl and lay it quivering before our eyes.

Mary read on, fascinated:

> Dark stubborn copse and little wood—
> Wild tresses of a calm-browed hill—
> Are there still shadows where we stood?
> (For, haply, you are waving still)
> Truant from soft blue skies above,
> Do shadows in your branches play
> As when we lapped ourselves in love
> To whispered music—yesterday?

"It's beautiful—that's what it is," sighed Mary, drinking tea with the fevered thirst of hopeless passion—vicarious, yet poignant. "It gives one that faint, sicky feeling, like

just one mouthful too many of cream bun or the sight of a plain girl embroidering braces he won't wear for a man you know doesn't care for her."

Another long sigh tore itself from her breast. She laid down "Ballads of Bébé-Ribbon" and stared with unseeing eyes at the window.

"There are white violets in the Sussex hedges," she went on, in the convulsed monotone of the amateur actress. "The little lambs are jumping about the fields and running races. I feel as if I couldn't bear it. Life is too beautiful, and yet very, very empty. I don't know what to do. Shall I go down to Brighton for a few days?"

She sat on the edge of the bed, thrusting back the masses of golden-brown hair, a dewy softness in her golden-shot brown eyes. From the adjacent boudoir came tinkling sounds as Celandine, the perfect maid, busied herself with the apparatus of breakfast.

"Eggs and bacon!" groaned Mary. "Or scrambled eggs, or poached eggs on toast, or sole. The everlasting tyranny of food, and on a day like this. Faugh!"

She flung on a pink silk wrap and gazed around wildly for little satin *mules*.

"I shall go down to Brighton on the Douglas," she stormed, "and take rooms at a hotel, and make them put fresh flowers in them, and open the windows and take out the notices about visitors' washing, and get it to look a bit like home. Then I shall come back and go to the Britannic Palace and see that 'Ballads of Bébé-Ribbon' scene they've put into the revue there, and soak in my dear 'François.' Then I shall pack my nicest frocks and depart to the seaside, and perhaps the spring will not be so cruel to Mary there."

Running bathroomwards, she cried out in agony:

"Celandine, I beg of you not to make breakfast too substantial this morning, and kindly shove "Pale Hands I Love——" on the gramophone. It has that heart-lacerating appeal suitable to the season."

Having wallowed in a warm, scented flood, Mary, a passionate motor-cyclist, assumed the tan rainproof breeches, short skirt, boots, and puttees suitable to this pursuit, and toyed nonchalantly with her breakfast. Celandine rang up the garage while her mistress smoked a meditative cigarette, and presently Mary was purring at an indiscreet speed along that classic highway, the Brighton Road.

In due season she began to dodge the Brighton motor 'buses, and swung right-handed up that front where once the knuts, hatless, drove highly-plated, latest models up and down, up and down, fetching up finally in the respectable district of Hove before the irreproachable Regent-Paragon Hotel.

Here waiters, garage men, and others fawned on Mary. She lunched, she booked her rooms. She gave her instructions, and could have cried. What are bricks and mortar in springtime? Even the lawns of Hove, deservedly famous, failed to modify the sophisticated atmosphere of the Regent-Paragon.

"I mustn't give way," moaned poor Mary, powdering her nose desperately. "I must seek bright society. What's the good of moping in some village? Now here they have a palm court——"

She flung herself upon the Douglas and shook the dust of Brighton off her tyres.

Another scented bath, a loving toilette, the putting on of a little, grave black gown suited to emotions in a minor key, and a lone expedition to our gayest theatre, dinner in solitude, brought Mary to a stage-box at the Britannic Palace. It would have accommodated four people, but there remained no other seat in the house. Mary's loneliness increased; she felt like one immured. Even what musical people call the scarlet of the trombones, almost under her nose, failed to inspire her.

Soon the loveliest limbs in London wantoned lightheartedly before her brooding eyes. Snappily syncopated songs dealing with the better-known watersheds of the United States issued from the mouths of comedians disguised as umbrellas. The audience laughed in happy glee. It was what they were used to, and they knew no better. In due season appeared the enormously successful scene based on the "Ballads of Bébé-Ribbon," by François.

As a levy of hot-house peaches danced on in garments plentifully intersected with that sort of ribbon seldom worn by genuine babies, the door of Mary's box clicked. There entered a tall individual clad in the beautiful blue of the Navy, with the braid of a lieutenant on his cuffs. He possessed a hawk-nosed, Navy face and an affectionate mouth, made fiercer than Nature intended by the ruthless character of his profession. His eyes were riveted on the stage, so that he did not perceive Mary.

The chorus collapsed on the hard boards. The lady with a part began to sing one of the tenderest lyrics of François in one of those hard, reedy voices so fashionable nowadays. It impinged on the tympanum as gratefully as cheap red wine harmonises with fish.

The naval person nodded slowly.

"One of your rating ought to be borne in every ship in the Fleet," he murmured.

"You could sing to us when we were sinking. It'd make drowning easier. So this is what it has come to! I wish I had a machine-gun about me. You get a beautiful enfilade on the stage from here."

Mary listened entranced.

"Good-evening," she said, as his words died away.

The stranger turned his back on the entertainment and considered her. His war-worn features softened into a most captivating smile. It bathed Mary in a warm, respectful glow.

"Good-evening," he replied courteously. "It becomes plain to me that I trespass. The management shall hang for this. They told me I could have this box. Obviously, you paid real money for it. Forgive me. May I stay, or shall I go and stand in the prom.? Standing is such weary work."

"Please stay," permitted Mary graciously.

The seafarer sat down upon a plush chair, still averting his face from the stage.

"Tell me you don't like it," he implored. "Say it's beastly. Fancy having one's most sacred thoughts yelped out by that anatomical peculiarity over there. You look as if you could understand and sympathise. How would you enjoy it?"

"I hardly follow you," replied Mary. "If you mean, having read the works of François do I consider what we are witnessing is a piece of wicked sacrilege, I do. But I wonder at your feeling like that about it. I should have thought all those pretty girls would have appealed to you very strongly. As a rule sailors adore them."

Her new acquaintance sighed.

"As girls I haven't anything against them. They would fill an idle hour well enough. But the rest of it—to think that these—these *déversondées*——"

He paused, momentarily overcome.

"You see," he ended sadly, "*I* am François. I rely on your discretion. No one else knows but my publisher. I wouldn't tell *any*body. But you are different. I saw that from the outset. Did I not sing to you in Babylon, or did we set a sail in Carthage Bay? My name is Francis Everard Barington. I've got five days' leave, and I come up to find this outrage going on. Do tell me yours."

"Mine," said his hostess, faint from various emotions, "is Mary Gray."

Lieutenant Barington rose from the plush chair as one who casts a weight from his shoulders. The curtain came down, the house lights went up, and Mary perceived he had very blue eyes, which smiled down at her with an expression of mingled joy and admiration.

"Let's get out of this," he implored. "I've just come off the sea, and the spring smell of the land has gone to my head. This theatre is a perfectly devilish place. We might be doing more with our lives than stay here. Do come and have some supper. Come to the Magnifique, and then we can get to know one another. You don't realise what a long time it is since I spent any money on a girl."

Mary smiled up at him. She began to feel very happy.

"I should love it," she said simply. "I always go mad in the spring. It seems the only intelligent thing to do. As a rule, people are much too sane."

He was already holding her theatre coat. He shepherded her along red corridors out into the foyer, where a subservient commissionaire called an unreluctant taxicabman. Soon they sat opposite one another in the white and gold chastity of the Restaurant Magnifique with Aristide himself hovering about them.

Mary's friend flung out short, swift commands, selecting, rejecting, revelling in everything. He could not do enough for her. Aristide evolved a special ice for the occasion, all frozen peaches and liqueurs. The choicest brands in his cellar came forth with ceremony. A hush brooded over the waiters who served. They felt themselves not as other men. They foresaw the tips, and licked their lips.

"François," said Mary at last, gazing at him across her coffee cup and offering him one of Alexandr Alexandrovitch's priceless cigarettes, "François, you are a wonder. You give me a new interest in life. You do things like an experienced child; you're so un-bored. How can you manage it?"

He smiled back at her, and there was a lilt in his voice not altogether vinous in origin.

"Five days," he chanted softly. "Five days' leave. It shall be a poem, a long ramp of splendour, an absolute knockout. You've nothing to do, have you? What about the social whirl—home ties, and all that?"

"I live in my own little flat, where they cater for me. I've nothing on earth to do. I *was* going to Brighton——"

"I will strew your path with roses, and it shan't be the Brighton Road either. It's getting late and I don't want to spoil our first evening and make you dog-tired. Let me drive you home and I'll call round in the morning, if I may. Then I'll unstow the promised land. Are you ready, Micheline?"

He stayed to smoke one cigarette in the little black and old-rose boudoir. Then he glanced at the clock. It pointed nearly to the hour of midnight.

Soon they sat opposite one another in the white and gold chastity of the Restaurant Magnifique with Aristide himself hovering about them.

"I'd better be going. Fare thee well till to-morrow. What a great evening! Thanks awfully."

He wrung her hand and left. There was certainly a something about him, for Mary felt the electricity from his clasp run all up her arm.

II.

Very early in the morning there arrived Lieutenant Barington, otherwise François, bearing a great mass of Neapolitan violets. He found Mary clad in a most perfect blue suit. In an agony of joy he watched her pin a very few of his violets on to her coat before she set forth at his side to walk in the Park.

There is no more delightful spot than Hyde Park in the spring. It is like a soul released from prison, or a woman starved for new clothes suddenly presented with six of everything. François, glancing down at the yard and seven-eighths of beautifulness by his side began to lay out his course with all the enthusiasm of twenty-eight years on five days' leave.

"This to some extent is all very fine, Mary," he began. "If one is accustomed to the sort of potted life they lead in London, well and good. We are not, however. I believe you drive a motor-cycle. I used to have a nine-horse twin with overhead valves myself once. Now I have a great forty-horse car finished in battleship grey—a regular war car, but the last word to drive. And, also, I have a place down in the West that I simply must show you. It's in South Cornwall and as old as sin. There are great scarlet tree-fuchsias growing in the open and hedges of hydrangeas and the grounds go down to the cliff edge, and you can walk miles without seeing a soul."

"Yes?" said Mary. "What will your mother or your aunt or whatever it is say, François, when you drift in out of infinity accompanied by a strange girl? I can see there will be an awkward pause when I cross the threshold."

"No there won't. I am a lone person, and there is only my housekeeper. She will look after you and I shall stay at the game-keeper's cottage or the wood-cutter's hut or

sleep in the boat-house. It will be the very pink of propriety, Mary dear. You must come. You *must*. Oh, Mary, do come. Have you ever known a spring in the West? It isn't like England at all, and yet you couldn't get it anywhere else but in England."

"Well, François, as we are quite mad I suppose I'd better do what is nice and, no doubt, quite wrong, as all nice things are. It'll take ages to motor there. What clothes do you want me to wear? Come and lunch at the flat and help me pack."

He took her to Stewart's and fed her on sandwiches and sherry. Then they returned to Portland Place and Mary paraded the likely part of her wardrobe. He chose a tweed suit and walking boots, two or three drill skirts for boat work and a Burberry. She added a little frock to rest in, and after lunch he insisted on her buying a thick white sweater to wear at sea. Celandine packed the whole collection and sent it to the garage in Wardour Street.

They lingered over tea at the Carlton.

"What time do you want to start on this trip?" she queried thoughtfully. "It must be three hundred miles or so."

"Three a.m., please, Mary-est. We've got to do it at a go, you see, to avoid—er—um—complications. I propose taking you home after this so that you can get a lot of sleep. I want to have a run over the car, too, before I turn in. No good trusting to somebody else."

Mary sat back and gazed at nothing with shining eyes.

"Well, François," she observed judicially, "I've done a good many remarkable things, but this is going, at least, to equal any of the others. Is it you making me or me making you?"

She bent towards him, resting her hands on the table; for a second he held them in his own.

"It's we making us, good luck to us!" he said softly.

III.

"We shall never," said Mary, "get any nearer Heaven than we are now until we are actually, as they say in the Army, issued with a harp, golden, one."

It was 4.30 a.m. of a superb morning in late May. The risen sun gilded all the trees of the field and the beasts of the field, and no people appeared to exert their banal influence. All motoring is good, but motoring in the early hours is perfect.

"It's my watch, Lieutenant Barington. You can hand over to me," she continued.

Many friendships might have cracked under the test, yet, without a word, he stopped the car and changed seats. If he trembled inwardly he trembled without need. Mary changed up as if she had driven the car all her life and was doing forty miles an hour in the briefest possible space. The endless ribbon of road reeled by; soon the farm carts began to materialise; according to the population of a village street they guessed at breakfast time, halted by the roadside and looted the commissariat. Then onward ever onward until the green of Somerset gave place to the green of Devon, and the green of Devon to the green of Cornwall.

In the earlier part of the journey Mary drove a good deal. She wanted to keep her pal as fresh as possible. Three hundred miles on end are no joke. During the afternoon she slept a little in the rear seats of the car.

At 9 p.m. they slid, ghost-like, through the tiny Cornish village of Merranforth, past a few astounded fisher folk, and turned up the drive leading to Poldreath, the ancestral abode of all the Baringtons. The sole male heir of these worthy people on drawing up at his front door staggered rather than fell from the driving-seat and rubbed his tired eyes.

"We've done it, Mary," he stammered. "Shades of steam trials dead and gone, we've done it. Here is my friend Mrs. Trethewy, who will minister unto you. Give me supper and let me sleep. I can see green cats leaping out of the bonnet to catch pink mice in the radiator."

"'Dust unto dust and under dust to lie,'" quoted Mary, wiping a grimy face with a grimy hanky. "I shall never be clean again."

"'Tis proper dusty over to Merranforth," agreed the native chatelaine in her fascinating idiom, doing the honours of the house.

They ate as in a dream. François wrung Mary's hand and tottered away towards the gamekeeper's cottage.

Mary, almost crying with weariness, let her clothes lie where they fell, pitched headlong into a bed dating back to the remotest antiquity, and slept like a log.

In the morning the stillness awoke her. It weighed down the air. The sudden cry of a pheasant came like an explosion. She jumped out of bed and ran to the window. All was still, green, undisturbed. In every direction stretched wooded slopes, whose trees seemed to grow while she watched them in the warm, dreamy, sun-riddled air.

Mary gave a little yell of joy, bathed, scrambled into one of the drill skirts and a

Before an hour had passed she was sitting up in the bows changing over the jib-sheet like an expert when they tacked, quite wet and very happy. (Page 181, col. 2.)

silk shirt and ran downstairs carrying a scarlet suède hat and the recommended sweater. The scent of tobacco led her into the oak-panelled dining-room. She saw François seated by the open window smoking a cigarette and fitting hooks to a fishing-line.

"Hullo!" he said. "The mackerel are biting. Come and have breakfast and then catch your first mackerel. We possess, Miss Gray, a fifteen-footer, the *Maid of Poldreath*, with a high local reputation for speed. I am considered cunning in the matter of boat sailing. If you'll spill the tea into the cups, I'll cut you all the ham you deserve."

Mary, eyeing with satisfaction her big, broad host clad in white flannels and a sweater, fed quietly yet adequately. He led her by a little laughing path through the woods over a hill and down a valley to the tiny harbour of Merranforth, where the *Maid of Poldreath* lay tied to the quay, Providence having sent a convenient high tide.

François helped her scramble on board and sculled his craft round the pier-head. Then he hoisted the mainsail and Mary, who had never sailed before, began to live.

Before an hour had passed she was sitting up in the bows changing over the jib-sheet like an expert when they tacked, quite wet and very happy. She had removed her soaked stockings and sat wedged against the mast, her skirt tucked under her and her bare legs rapidly changing colour from salt water and sun. It was life.

They caught a few mackerel, but Mary felt too happy to kill anything. She liked to be as close as possible to the bow-wave and hear the water drum as it passed on the boat's mahogany sides.

All the afternoon they idled on a great green headland fronting the Atlantic, smoked, ate chocolates, and nearly went to sleep. The warm, drowsy air seemed to bathe them in peace. The green, glorious country appeared so rich, so reproductive, that no adversity, no visitation of enemies could conspire successfully against it. South Cornwall lay before them like an impossibly beautiful woman crowned with flowers and everlasting youth.

At night the moon rose over that rugged, rock-bound coast and awed them into stillness. They sat in silence on a pinnacle of granite; Mary felt as though she were being dangled about over infinity, and her companion suffered refined, curious tortures because he loved her with a love that was more than love, yet, considering their situation, he felt he ought not to tell her so.

So he left it till the last evening, after dinner, when Mary, in her little frock, wandered beside him along the laughing pathway to sit upon a cliff edge and watch the track of the moon across a violet sea.

In the quaint, detached fashion of a lover he noticed the burnished smoothness of her parted hair, marking the contour of her small, proud head. Mary was pulling a stalk of grass to pieces slowly, mechanically, her mind a blissful blank of pure happiness. Nothing could ever be more beautiful than this place. Time seemed to stand still. One hardly dared breathe for fear of starting Time on his treadmill again.

"Mary," said François suddenly, and his voice broke. The throb of his heart seemed to choke him. He wanted her so much; he feared so much to lose her.

She looked up and saw him. He carried his fate written in his eyes. Her own eyes grew big and piteous. She liked him very much, and yet——

"Mary," he said again, "do you like me a little bit? I love you so much. I think I shall die if you're going to hate me for asking you. I can't help it. Nobody could help loving you, dear. And all the love in the world wouldn't be enough to love you with."

She realised he had taken her left hand, and was stroking it with the most extraordinary gentleness. There came into her mind with sudden, unhappy knowledge, the mockery of friendship between a man and a woman. If they can be friends they care so little, and if they care so much what are they to do?

She gripped his hand in a sort of despairing sympathy. The world seemed tumbling about her ears.

"Poor François," she said very softly, and he knew she was crying. "I can't tell you, my dear. I don't know how. Love is so terrible for a girl. I don't suppose you understand. It costs her such a great deal—far, far more than a man. I s'pose a man's love takes him into heaven, but a girl's must take her down into hell, and she wants to be so sure it's strong enough. I think you're a dear thing, and I want to be square with you. I expect you think I'm an ass."

He continued to stroke the hand with a sort of inarticulate fondness.

"No, Mary, you aren't an ass. If I were a girl I should never have enough courage. That's why I'm so terrified. I'm afraid you won't either."

"Give me a little while to make up my mind," she pleaded.

"And in the meanwhile you'll let me love you a little bit—please, darling."

She drifted into his arms like a tired child going to its mother. He cradled her head

on his shoulder, and kissed her white, wet face, her troubled eyes, her soft, unhappy mouth, until she smiled up at him in a sort of defiant content.

"You are a wonderful lover, François," she murmured. "You make me frightened and yet somehow very safe. I wish I could say 'Yes' now, and just let you take care of me for ever and ever. I will try—truly, truly I will. Can you make that do for now?"

"Just as you want, Princess," he answered. "We're both in your hands. Please be very careful of you, for my sake."

IV.

"I am in charge of motor-boat patrols somewhere on the South Coast," explained François, eating his luncheon opposite Mary in the expensive simplicity of the Restaurant Magnifique. "It would be a kind deed if you were to occupy those rooms you engaged at the Regent Paragon in Hove. You wouldn't be a thousand miles from me, and we could see one another a bit. Is it a go?"

"Very well," assented Mary, becoming suddenly thoughtful. Back in town, among the conventional machinery of life, the passionate, tear-wet kisses of South Cornwall seemed very far away. It annoyed her to find they still troubled her soul. Every time François kissed her good-night in the hall of her flat she recaptured the fever of that lotus land. Every morning when she awoke it came over her with a sort of a panic that her freedom was slipping away. Would any man's love make up for the loss?

"I shall drive down on the Douglas," she continued. "I want a lonely blind. You've got to go to-day. I'll start to-morrow morning. Don't worry about me. I've got the hump or the blue devils or something."

He laughed a curious lilting laugh.

"You are such a little thing," he said, with the strange, protecting accent of the male lover—"far too small to stand being unhappy, really. Don't be an unhappy mite. I love you, and you are wearing my violets. There!"

"*Kolossal!*" mocked Mary, and gurgled in spite of herself.

So eventually they parted, he going to his trade of fighting, she to hers of being pretty to the verge of heartbreak. He sent her gay letters full of polite mockery because his days were full of seriousness.

"I think I feel lonely in this large place," wrote Mary, and he replied:

There are the Ship, the Metropole, the Grand,
The Royal York—behold on every hand
A caravanserai for men who rove;
They wander, yet you do not understand,
O Maid of Hove?

Flawless ice-beauties in the frozen North,
Sun-maidens, honey-eyed, of Merranforth
Set in the West where love abode and throve
Curse you, and weep to see their men go forth,
O Maid of Hove!

Then one afternoon the big grey car dashed up to her hotel, and he sprang out. To Mary he seemed a new person. It was Lieutenant Barrington, R.N., who saluted her rather than François, the author of "Ballads of Bébé-Ribbon."

"I've come to say *au revoir*," he explained. "Going out in a destroyer to-night for a bit of a strafe. We shan't be back inside a week or so. Be sorry. They do chase their tails if the sea gets up at all. No—don't be sorry really. I didn't mean it. *Mary!*"

She had gone suddenly pale. The hotel sitting-room with its stereotyped furniture seemed to fade. Instead she saw a midnight sea, the darkness shot with flashes of flame, the silence shattered by the crash of guns. So she loved him more than she knew!

He gathered her golden brown head against his heart and stroked it tenderly.

"Try not to be a little damp girl. I've only got ten minutes, dear. Please be happy!"

And yet his pulses leapt because she was afraid for him. He felt a brute, and was very glad.

The week or so lengthened into a fortnight. Mary found no comfort in anything. She fretted, and despised herself for fretting. She told herself she did not love him, she could not marry him, yet the Douglas languished in the garage, and Mary's perfect oval face seemed faintly etherealised by some overpowering emotion. Her heart was calling to her lover, and he could not hear.

He came at last—his face drawn from want of sleep, his uniform battered by the sea, his left-hand bandaged through some accident, the brooding look in his eyes of one who has looked on death. He dropped into a chair by Mary's tea-table, and told her without words how happy she made him.

"Have you joyed yourself, young woman?" he asked anxiously. "Are you having a good time? You look just a little piece thinner; sure you aren't seedy or anything?"

And then she knew, and her heart sang because of the knowledge. He had come straight off the sea, out of the midst of battle, and still he thought first of her. The risk was not great, chanted Mary's heart, and where there is no risk there is no joy, anyhow.

She went round to his side, took his tired head in her arms, and cradled it where it belonged.

"My dear," she said, very low yet very clearly, "I *knew* I should die if you didn't

come back, and now I shall live because you have come, and I don't want anybody but you ever, ever, ever."

His eyes laughed into hers, and he reached up to draw her face down to his.

"You shan't have anyone else," he exulted. "You shall live under the sure shield of the Navy, upon which, under Providence, we do most chiefly depend—and so on and so forth."

For the first time Mary kissed him all by herself.

V.

In the black and old rose boudoir of her flat Mary sat after a solitary dinner, smoking a reflective cigarette. Celandine, having accomplished all things, had departed to those mysterious recesses where servants dwell in blocks of service flats. It was the eve of Mary's wedding, and she had stipulated for solitude. There are so many memories to review and store away—some of them for ever—on these occasions.

She proceeded slowly to the usual little cremation—a photograph or two, a bundle of letters, various time-worn relics, each with its faint, sentimental fragrance. "The King is dead—long live the King." Even pretty girls wade through slaughter to their ultimate throne.

Then, in the soft glow of the electric light, Mary gazed around her dainty, miniature home, the sands of whose tenancy had so nearly run out, and with a little, reminiscent smile placed a record of "Pale Hands I Love" on the gramophone.

Finally the music ceased. Mary stopped the clockwork, and stood for a moment considering a certain photograph.

"*His* hands aren't pale," she said aloud, with a woman's magnificent pride in her man. "They're very strong and very tender, and they'll hold all my life so perfectly safe until—until I don't need it held any longer, and even then, if there's another world, they'll hold it still."

And so, for the last time, Mary crept into her little pink and white bed, in the pink and white bedroom whence, in the morning, she would set out joyfully on such a long journey.

POSTMAN'S KNOCK.

When I was just a flapper with a floppy ribbon bow,
I simply hated Jimmy, and I often told him so;
But nothing seemed to squash him, and he hung round just the same,
Especially at parties when they played a kissing-game:
No matter how I sulked and frowned, he'd only laugh and mock—
That boy would *always* choose me when it came to "Postman's Knock."

But since I've put my hair up, my views have altered quite;
I met Lieutenant Jimmy at a party Boxing Night,
And tho' we played old-fashioned games of every sort and kind,
It's really rather funny, but I didn't seem to mind.
In fact, perhaps you've guessed it, and will hear without a shock
That I whispered "Yes" to Jim behind the door at "Postman's Knock."

And now he's in the trenches, or that's the last I've heard,
It's four whole weeks to-morrow since his letter brought me word.
Altho' I've written heaps of times there hasn't come a line—
I'm getting rather anxious for that soldier-man of mine.
I try to hold my head up, but my smiles are low in stock—
Oh, it's weary, weary waiting, Jimmy, for the postman's knock!

A. P.

"A Shilling, PLEASE!"

Miss Gladys Cooper, the beautiful young actress, has very kindly consented to appeal this year in the ROYAL on behalf of the Fresh Air Fund—the Children's Charity. It exists, as most readers of the ROYAL know, to send City children to the country in the summer time. A shilling pays for a day's holiday for one child. £10 10s. pays for a party of 200, with necessary attendants, and 12s. 6d. sends a child to the country for a fortnight. All working expenses are borne by the promoters, and the whole of the money subscribed directly benefits the children. Please send subscriptions to the Hon. Sec. F.A.F., care of THE ROYAL MAGAZINE, 18 Henrietta Street, London, W.C.—Ed. R.M.

Photo Bassano & Vandyk

Miss Gladys Cooper, who is kindly appealing for the Fresh Air Fund this year.

It was the spade and pail that did it. We were having a field-day, Nurse and I, marshalling the children's seaside kit for inspection, the children being Joan, aged five and a half, and John Rodney, who is at the nice, cuddly age of ten months.

Joan's one grievance was her spade and pail. It wrung her young heart to think of going to Frinton a whole year bigger and without a pail and spade of corresponding proportions. She suggested that they should descend to John, who, despite his tender age, she proposes to initiate into the making of sand-pies. Joan *will* have a time keeping pace with him; John's *so* good at pulling things to pieces.

"May I have a new spade and pail, Mummy?" Joan begged. "They won't cost very much, and you *can* spare a shilling, can't you?"

Of course I had to admit that the expenditure would not reduce me to penury, and sent Joan off as chirpy as possible.

It was this little incident that set me thinking what a lot of pleasure you can give to a kiddie for a shilling. And that's why I want to "put you wise," as the Americans say, about a scheme which ensures a whole day's happiness for some poor child at the trifling cost of a shilling.

Pretty soon you'll all be thinking of your holidays. You need them. We all do. But we at least live in decently airy streets, and many of us have gardens where roses are beginning to bloom and lilacs blossom in shady corners. So if we need a spell in the country, what about the kiddies who have no playground but the stifling streets, and no refuge from the heat but the airless rooms of a crowded tenement?

Whether they are ever to escape depends on you. By sending a shilling to the Fresh Air Fund you can give one kiddie a glorious day among the buttercups, a golden day such as children love, with good things to eat, and all the riotous games that can never be played properly in the narrow streets.

And if you have a very big heart and a purse a bit fuller than the average, won't you send 12s. 6d., and give some little slum child a whole fortnight of wholesome fare and fresh breezes in the country?

Anyhow, you'll manage the shilling, won't you?

Please do! I am so anxious to have a real big harvest of them.

Gladys Cooper

CAN YOU NAME OUR

MYSTERIOUS PICTURES?

(See next page.)

£100 IN PRIZES.

Full Particulars of a Great New ROYAL Competition.

On the following page appear twelve odd-looking pictures. We call them "Photo-Puzzes," because each is a photo that is a puzz-le. See? They represent familiar objects—things you may see or use every day—but the objects are photographed from an unusual point of view. Similar pictures will appear in the ROYAL next month. The first prize of £50 will go to the competitor who solves all, or the greatest number, of the pictures correctly.

All you have to do is to write what you consider to be the correct name under each object illustrated.

The prizes in this competition are most attractive, totalling £100, among them a first prize of £50 and a second prize of £20. Reflect what a long and tiresome business it is to earn or save £50, and then consider that, with a few strokes of the pen, it may be yours—so start solving the pictures now!

HOW TO ENTER THE CONTEST TO-DAY.

The first 18 pictures appeared in the May ROYAL, which may be obtained through any newsagent for 6d., or will be sent post free for 9d from The Publisher, ROYAL MAGAZINE, 18 Henrietta Street, London, W.C.

CONDITIONS OF COMPETITION.

1. The names must be clearly written in ink. (Use a fine pen.)
2. Only one name is allowed under each picture.
3. No alterations are to be made in the words. If you have made a mistake in the spelling, cross the word out and write it again.
4. When you have filled up the list cut it out and keep it by you until the date for sending in solutions is announced in the ROYAL.
5. You may forward as many sets of pages as you like. Each set will be judged independently, and the pages composing it must be fastened together in the top left-hand corner.
6. The name of the object as stated in a list in the possession of the Editor is the correct solution.
7. No competitor may receive the assistance of professional competition solvers who send out circulars or whose advertisements appear in the Press. Every person who enters for this competition must do so on this understanding, and the winners will be asked to satisfy us that they have not contravened this condition.
8. The first prize of £50 will be payable to the competitor who solves all, or the greatest number, of the pictures correctly. A second prize of £20 and five prizes of a £5 Pathéphone (with records) will be awarded to the senders of second, third, fourth, fifth, sixth, and seventh most correct sets received. Ten consolation prizes of 10s. each will be distributed at the Editor's discretion among those who come next. In the event of ties, the Editor reserves the right to divide the prize-money.
9. The Editor's decision is final, and competitors enter on this understanding.

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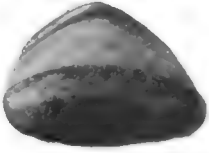

30. .....

NAME.....

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WE MUST RULE THE AIR!

Mr. Pemberton Billing, the Member for East Herts, will go down to posterity as the man who urged upon the Government the need for drastic alterations in the Air Service. Mr. Billing is a real hot enthusiast on aeronautical matters, and in the following article he outlines a scheme by which the country might be defended against Zeppelin raids and the supremacy of the air be ours.

By Noel Pemberton-Billing, M.P.

Photo Central News.

Mr. Noel Pemberton-Billing, M.P., who urges the need for improvement in our Air Service.

Readiness for war is the best guarantee of peace. How often did we hear public men who believed in a strong Navy and a paramount sea supremacy urge that sentiment in the years that are gone, and how often were we warned that only by being prepared for war on land could we hope to make ourselves strong enough to avert a conflict? There are those who argue that all our expenditure, all the wealth so lavishly poured out by the nations of Europe did not succeed in holding back the tide of war. That is true enough.

But is not the answer that the determining factor in this awful conflagration was Great Britain, and that, while we were strong on the seas and could dictate our own terms on the wide waters, we were wholly unprepared for such a war on land as Germany launched upon a startled world in July-August, 1914?

Wanted! Men of Broader Outlook.

But some of us dream dreams and see visions. The man who has not imagination in his soul is the man of to-day only. What we need in statesmanship are men whose mental boundaries are limited only by infinite possibilities, not the small and narrow-minded politician who cannot see much further than the benches facing him in the House of Commons. To such men Westminster is the world; the future is bounded by to-morrow's Order Paper, and the idea of budgetting for posterity or laying the foundations of a new Imperial greatness are but as the dreams of indigestion, not as the clear-sighted visions of prophets and patriots.

I look to our Imperial supremacy once more to establish, and, this time, to maintain the peace of the world, and it is on our dominion in the air that I place all my hopes and pledge all my beliefs. It is, therefore, with the object of rebuilding the power of the British Empire, of re-asserting our place in civilisation as the supreme and merciful

arbiter among nations, that I preach my gospel of Air Supremacy.

Before I endeavour to prove the might and influence of the Empire once we gain paramount ascendency in the air, let me draw a picture, by no means exaggerated nor beyond the bounds of practical possibility, of the position of this country if we allow the present grave condition of things to continue and develop until we find ourselves not merely, as we are to-day, the third Power in the air, but gradually drawn backwards until we are stripped of every possibility of defending the ocean of the air from the incursions and victories of the enemy.

Gone—Our Boasted Isolation.

It does not require any very fertile imagination to realise in how profound a fashion air warfare has changed our sea-girt isle into a country as vulnerable as the most insignificant state, as open to attack as the smallest country bounded on all sides by nations in arms.

Our long-boasted isolation has disappeared—our invulnerability, the pride of our forefathers, the still happy fact of yesterday, has been destroyed—and to-day we are the subject of, and the sufferer from, repeated air attacks by the enemy which, while they bring death and damage, are a standing affront to our dignity as the great world Power, and a growing menace to our Imperial strength.

Think what it will mean for Great Britain—and Great Britain means the British Empire, of which it is the soul and the heart—if Germany is permitted to retain the supremacy of the air. It is useless deceiving ourselves. Our present enemy will be our future enemy, in spite of the peace which this ruthless and costly war may bring forth in its train, unless we prove ourselves true to our great traditions and worthy of our Imperial destiny.

To-day we think of aircraft in scores and in hundreds. Picture the nation which in a few years possesses these dark messengers of death in hundreds of thousands, picture that nation as our enemy, and see aeroplanes developed by experience beyond the capacity for flight and for fury at present dreamt of, and then realise what it would mean for Great Britain if they darkened our skies like locusts over the African veldt.

What We Ought to Do Now.

I am not going to suggest that there is a man in this country whose duty it is to know at any moment of the twenty-four hours where every Zeppelin is being built, housed, or temporarily sheltered. But I do say that it is a deplorable state of affairs if some such Intelligence Chart does not exist.

Assuming the existence of such a chart, the protection of this country from Zeppelin attack rapidly assumes simple proportions. The Director of Aircraft Operations, if such a person exists, stands in front of this chart with a pair of compasses in one hand and a list of our effective bomb-dropping aeroplanes in the other. He measures off the distance from the nearest Ally base or the nearest 30-acre field behind the French lines to the nearest Zeppelin base.

Having discovered this to be X miles, he peruses his list until he comes to a machine which is capable of carrying the petrol for 2 X miles, which means the distance from the 30-acre field to the Zeppelin base and home again.

Referring to column 2 in his list, where the information is afforded him, he discovers that this machine has sufficient lift to carry, as well as the necessary petrol, a pilot and two hundred pounds of explosives. In fact, he will most probably find 20, and, so far as the practical flight to some Zeppelin bases is concerned, 200 machines capable of "delivering the goods."

So he sends—or should send—for a Squadron Commander whose skill and daring are known to him—or should be known to him—and he hands him the following chit:

"To Squadron Commander B.,

"You will commission the following machines, 208, 207, 306, 508, 602, 169, and proceed to 'Somewhere in France,' marked X, when on the first favourable opportunity you will visit a base on the accompanying map of the enemy's country marked A, where you will discover two Zeppelin sheds which contain Zeppelins, and which you must destroy. You will take every available precaution to ascertain before starting that the Zeppelins are home. If the first attack is unsuccessful, you will renew your attacks at the first available opportunity; you will requisition supplies as required, but will not return until these sheds and their contents are destroyed. When success has attended your efforts you will report for further instructions."

Destroy the Enemy Nests.

This is not quite the wording of an official order; perhaps it would be as well if it were. The Squadron Commander would leave his Chief proud, eager, and confident, anxious only—if the Chief is the right man—not only to carry out orders, but to excel in their

execution. In personally selecting his pilots, which would be his first duty, he would transmit to them the inspiration of his Chief, and when the door closed behind him his Chief would return to his chart and his compasses and proceed to scheme the destruction of other enemy nests.

This is no romance; I know what I am writing about. That chart could be evolved on the information at the disposal of our Secret Services in a few days. That Chief could be found. The Squadron Commanders and the pilots are here in abundance. The only reason, therefore, England may assume, that the breeding grounds of these pests of the night remain undisturbed is that the Nelson touch is missing.

Those people who talk of "baby-killers" and murderers exhaust me. To suggest for one moment that there does not exist a strong "military significance" in these Zeppelin raids shows the utter inability of my critics to realise the fundamental principles of war. The people who object to reprisals bore me. Ninety-nine per cent. of them don't know what it means.

Defending Cities by Night.

A fleet of defending aeroplanes is necessary. Each machine must be so armed as to be capable of destroying an airship at a range equal to the range of its own searchlight, which must be not less than one mile. It must also carry a searchlight driven independently of the engines. It must have a speed of at least eighty miles an hour in order to overtake airships.

It must be able to fly as slowly as thirty-five miles an hour in order to economise fuel and to render accurate gunfire and night landing possible.

It must be able to carry fuel for twelve hours' cruising at low speed, to enable it to chase an airship to the coast. It must be able to climb to 10,000 feet in not more than twenty minutes.

It must be fitted with control gear for two pilots, to allow one to relieve the other, and in the event of a gunner not being carried, each or either pilot must have equal facilities for working guns, bombs, and searchlights.

The engines must be silenced.

The pilots must have a clear view and arc of fire above, in front, and below

(N.B.—All the above requirements are within the capacity of any competent aeroplane designer.)

The defending fleet must consist of at least fifty such aeroplanes, continually ready to fly at any moment. Therefore, 150 such machines at least must exist in an undamaged condition.

Fifty pilots must always be on duty, with twenty-five in reserve.

This fleet should be under the absolute and independent command of a young and keen officer who has had active service experience.

It should be divided into ten squadrons of five machines each, which squadrons should be stationed at aerodromes adjoining the main road, rail, and river approaches to cities, at a radius of approximately ten miles from the centre of the city.

Adequate landing places should be provided in city parks in case of machines being compelled to descend by accident or by enemy fire.

Systems of Communication.

These and the defence aerodromes should be adequately lighted and permit of landing at night, and there should be a properly concerted and consistently practised and rehearsed system of interchange of light signals between aeroplanes and aerodromes, so that the aerodrome lights will only be used when required for landing, thus preventing the aerodromes from becoming landmarks for the enemy.

There must be direct telephonic or other system of inter-communication between all aerodromes and the central control office whence the officer commanding will direct operations without interference from other official quarters.

Searchlights must be multiplied exceedingly and anti-aircraft guns must be stationed at the coast and its neighbourhood, because enemy aircraft fly at their lowest near the coast in order to pick up bearings from coastal contour.

In these circumstances it would be advisable to return to the normal lighting of cities and districts, and not only would the fear of aerial invasion be materially reduced, but an invading fleet could be engaged and beaten before reaching the metropolis.

Defence by Day.

The same general system should prevail and the same aeroplanes may be used, and, owing to its being possible to work shorter spells of patrol, less fuel need be carried. This will naturally increase the climbing ability, which is the great factor in daylight fighting.

In addition to these machines each squadron of five patrol machines should have attached to it five high-speed "pusher" fighting machines to act as "destroyers" against the heavier-than-air machines. These must have a speed of at least 115 miles per hour, with a climbing rate of 10,000 ft. in not more than twelve minutes.

Vital parts must be armoured.

Given the organisation, which is perfectly obtainable and workable under existing conditions, cities and their environment may be made impregnable against aerial attack.

A Dream of Efficiency.

He is the man responsible for the air defence of England. His room in Whitehall is a large one. From where he stands with his back to the fire the distant wall is covered by a map of England, 15 feet square. It is painted on glass and cross-sectioned into a hundred squares varied in size. In the middle of the room on a large table is fixed a replica of the map, and in the centre of each of the sections indicating districts is a telegraphic key. Near by sits a writer facing the chart, and having in front of him an outline map of England marked in squares similar to the others.

Stepping to the table chart, the responsible man taps on the master key at the base of the map. The noise of a buzzer is heard—one long, three short. The writer is alert, pencil in hand, with eyes fixed on the wall chart. A few seconds interval and suddenly the map is illumined by patches of light. The order has been received and answered; the message "Weather conditions favourable to air raid" has radiated through England to the air-defence stations of the country.

How are these messages conveyed from the Commander-in-Chief in Whitehall by the pressing of a button, and what do these commanding officers do? Situated in each one of these districts is a room somewhat similarly fitted to that of the Chief's, but in place of the map of England on the wall is a map of his district divided into five or more sections, according to its civil or military importance.

Situated in each of these five sub-districts and in telegraphic connection with the commanding officer's map are listening posts; that is, wooden towers about 100 feet high, surmounted by four microphones capable of detecting the sound of engine or propeller at a considerable distance. They face N., S., E. and W. respectively. In the watch-room at the base of the tower sits the officer in charge. Under his control are a searchlight, an anti-aircraft gun, and at stations of strategical importance one or two night-flying aeroplanes.

Ready for Duty.

Together with the rest of the sub-stations through England this officer in charge receives the first warning call "Conditions favourable for a raid." The searchlight is at once tested, aeroplane engines are run, the guns are examined, and time fuses set. In a word, *the station is on duty*.

On the receipt of the raid alarm the commanding officer picks up the microphone receiver and waits. Half-an-hour passes; the distant whirr of propellers is heard proceeding from the north-east. The noise rapidly grows more distinct.

The commanding officer taps his key, and his district represented on the district commander chart lights up. A buzzer in the room sounds three times, and within ten seconds in the Commander-in-Chief's room in Whitehall his chart, in its turn, indicates the definite locality where enemy airships are heard.

The Commander-in-Chief decides in these circumstances to send up the aeroplanes of this district and three adjoining districts, and while at once darkening these sections gradually to darken contiguous sections.

To affect this he proceeds to his control board, and by the mere tapping of the keys of the various districts his orders are automatically carried out.

Everybody is on the alert. Four districts are in action; the others are in darkness and awaiting orders; the rest of the country is so far unaffected. Normal conditions prevail everywhere else. But so complete is the control from Whitehall, so perfect the system of intelligence, that in a moment, should other counties be threatened, the pressing of a button will put into operation the same offensive and defensive plans.

The Need for Central Control.

This conveys as simply as possible the principle of a system which, with the existing wireless, telegraphic, and telephonic facilities, could be established within a few weeks. It will be noticed that this plan of mine concentrates on central control, without which any system of aerial defence will prove illusory. Not only is the introduction of some such system imperative if we are to meet the existing situation calmly and effectively, but it is on such lines that we can eventually guarantee protection against attack from the air.

The introduction of this system into England to-morrow would mean the allocation to this service of approximately 300 guns, 500 searchlights, 500 to 700 aeroplanes, and the erection of 500 listening station towers—wooden structures which could be built at a comparatively small cost.

As to the *personnel* it should include a commander-in-chief, with a small staff, and a hundred district commanders, with something like thirty-five officers and men to each district, including pilots, gunners, and search light operators.

Willi-Willi, the outlaw, lay struggling upon the ground, but the heifer was performing the two-step with Lord Frederick balanced on his stomach across her neck just behind the head.

[Page 204, col. 1.]

The OLYMPIAD of DINGO CREEK

By Jeffrey Silant.

"No game was ever yet worth a rap
For an Englishman to p'ay,
Into which no danger, no mishap,
Could possibly find a way."

"There, darn yeh," said Sam. "I've done some fancy things in my time, but I'd not try again to convert a decent pair o' *molts* into puffy-sleeved ridin'-breeches for yew nor anyone else—that ends my tailorin'. Here! take off them goggles. I can't stand the sight o' yeh—yeh look like a bloomin' alligator. Yew and yeh pore sore eyes! Spare me days!

"If yeh get a flyin' start by daylight yeh can run through in the day, an' mind yew! yeh do better'n our last representative that went there. The honour o' the run's at stake, an' they're a tough lot of eggs teh tackle at Dingo Crick."

Next evening the young man to whom the above remarks were addressed arrived at Dingo Creek station. He apparently took no notice of the sneers of the five men who witnessed his arrival; he was far too dejected, complaining of the long ride and the heat, and his eyes were red-rimmed to the cheekbones, so he dared not take off his goggles even in the mild evening glow, though the glare of day was long since past.

He asked for "Mistah Wankin," and Billy Dunn the teamster apostrophised him contemptuously:

"Mistah Wankin be blowed! *That's* ole Jimmy Rankin over there, him with the red-roan whiskers."

The stranger approached Rankin wearily.

"Mistah Wankin, I believe——"

Jimmy didn't like to deny it, so said nothing, and the new chum continued:

"I am Lord Frederick de Winton Villiers, and come to give notice from Mungaroo Station that a thousand head of steers will be on your boundary next Thursday making for the coast, and Mistah Weavah would like to know how the watah is as far as Warra-Warra, because if it's scarce he'll have to send the cattle in two mobs."

"Yew can tell 'Mistah Weavah,' with my compliments, that the 'watahs' are all right owing teh local rains," replied Jimmy, "an' add teh 'Mistah Weavah' that we wish teh the devil he'd send a man an' not a *munjong* when he wants teh do business with Dingo Crick. It's an insult teh me an' my men."

"What d'you mean?" asked the incensed Lord Frederick quickly.

"I mean," replied Jimmy, "that every man comin' teh Dingo Crick has teh keep up the end o' his own run against our boys or has teh put up with results; last one Sam sent along was a *munjong* too—dunno where he gets 'em. A jackaroo's worse'n poison teh me, an' now he sends a second lady-help. We'll hev teh sew yew up like the last, sonny, an' learn Sam better."

"Deah! Deah!" quoth Villiers. "I don't quite understand."

"Best turn yeh hide loose an' come an' get some tucker," said Jimmy.

Villiers watered and belled his horse accordingly, turning him towards the station horses; then he returned to Jimmy at the house.

"Yeh got a decent-lookin' stock-whip there," allowed the latter, "an' a good revolver, too, at any rate."

"Oh, those," replied Lord Frederick, "belonged to a fellow called Seth O'Brien. Good chap, too. I believe—killed out in the ranges last muster."

"Sorry to hear that," Jimmy said. "I've heard of him; great horseman, they say. Pity his tools didn't descend to some 'un more respectable. Can yeh use that gun?"

"Really, I've not had much practice," said Lord Frederick.

"What yeh fancy yehself at?"

"Oh, I'm a demon at oughts-and-crosses," observed Lord Frederick; "in fact, I'm considered quite good at any indoor games."

"Right," said his host, "we'll test yeh after tucker."

At the meal Lord Frederick Villiers was as good as his word, acquitting himself remarkably well at this species of indoor pastime, for there was real fresh meat, which differed from the eternal salt-cow of Mungaroo. Also he had a pannikin of veritable milk to drink, for the Dingo Creek folks

kept "milkers," a thing unheard of where he came from.

"Ain't yeh never goin' teh stop browsin'?" inquired Jimmy, cutting up a fill for his pipe. "If yeh eats too much yeh're liable to get killed when yeh meet Bill there with the gloves presently."

"I am a very good boxer," said Lord Frederick, with his mouth full. "You need have no fear on my account."

"Oh, *are* yeh?" returned Jimmy, glancing at Bill the teamster, who hid a deprecatory smile in his whiskers.

"I'm feeling better now, thanks," observed Villiers presently, "and quite fit to box your representative. Do you use gloves, or—*au naturel?*"

"We hate murder," said his host, "so teh save Billy too much injury, yeh best use the gloves. Go an' get 'em Splinter,"—this last to his lanky son, a veritable chip of the old block, over whose flamboyant head had passed some nineteen sultry summers. "And," he continued, "yeh best remove them goggles—splintered glass in the eye ain't over-pleasant."

"Oh, I couldn't stand the glare of the lamp," Lord Frederick objected, "I'll take the risk. I am a trained boxer, and assure you you need have no fear for me."

The others, speechless at this self-assurance, cleared the room eager to gloat over the trouble to come.

"The only rule of our ring is *hit*," said Jimmy. "There ain't any rounds; yeh jus' slogs in till one's slogged out. Are yeh ready? Git at it!"

Villiers descended—so sudden his onslaught that his adversary, caught unwary, felt his head bring up with a crack against the slab-wall. The new chum gave him no chance to recover, but pummelled him mercilessly, stabbing, dabbing and jabbing, so that the herculean teamster had perforce to smother up as well as he could behind his guard, retreating along the wall against which the back of his head rattled at short intervals.

Villiers, a good deal taller than the teamster, had completely shaken off his apparent tiredness, moving rapidly and snakelike, with little more footfall than a cat. Making the most of his long reach he followed up his first advantage with a continuous shower of blows delivered at various parts of his adversary's anatomy, so that the latter, who preponderated by at least thirty-five pounds, smuggled his head into his shoulders, blinking his eyes in the lightning of the other's attack, and every blow in the region of his wind drew a gasp as might a plunge into an icy creek. And once more his head rattled against the wall.

"Hit 'im, Billy!" thundered Rankin, who saw the honour of the station dying out before his eyes. "Hit 'im, yeh skunk!" It was a terrible toned order. "Oh, why don't 'e hit 'im?"

The boss was in despair—he caught hold of the applauding Splinter and flung him across the room.

Suddenly with a backward spring the stranger quit his man, traversed the earthen floor and leant his back against the further wall.

"Now, Billy," shouted Rankin, "kill 'im—he's your meat now. Wade in an' kill 'im feh the honor o' Dingo Crick!"

"I can't watch 'is eyes," explained the teamster, his excuse couched in low, level tones, "but I'm goin' teh drive them blinkin' goggles clean through teh the back of 'is blinkin' head."

So saying, and without pretence at strategy, he advanced sturdily upon his foe. Two more strides and he would be upon him. Lord Frederick had not moved; his arms hung by his side.

"Oh, look out!" warned the Splinter in horror, "he'll smack yeh through the wall!"

But even as Billy struck, Lord Frederick, with a gurgling cry, seized at his heart and fell forward, the terrible blow whizzing above his head, so that the teamster shot forward over his body and crashed up against the wall.

They turned the fallen man over, but nothing could they do to bring him round. Every now and then a shudder passed through his frame, and occasionally a groan burst from his lips, otherwise he might have been dead.

Jimmy Rankin was incensed.

"Now, no decent man would go like that," he objected. "I got a good mind teh lay down alongside of 'im and rowk him up with me spurs."

They tried to force some liquor between the sufferer's clenched teeth, but all to no effect.

"Reckon we'll have teh give it through 'is nose, like a hawse," observed Jimmy. But here the stricken man showed signs of returning consciousness. He heaved a deep sigh.

"Oh, Mothah! Mothah! Where am I?" he moaned pathetically.

"What in thunder's the matter with yeh?" demanded Rankin.

"Angina pectoris!" replied the other.

"Wot?"

"Angina pectoris."

Two of the stockmen drew away hurriedly, but Jimmy evidently feared no infection. "Oh, rot!" he exclaimed, "yeh can't have *that* here—wot's the real name of it?"

"Heart trouble," whispered the sufferer, "brought on by—excitement—my doctah—strictly prohibited any—excitement—says I may drop dead—any minute—hereditary, ye know—all my ancestors since William of Normandy——"

"What yeh do feh it?" interrupted the owner.

"It will pass off presently," he said, "but I'm afraid I must not box any more to-night."

"Oh, mustn't yeh?" shouted the teamster. "If yeh can't come up teh scratch I win!"

The young man smiled feebly.

"Nevah mind. I must give you best according to your rules; perhaps we will have a friendly contest again some day. I should be awfully pleased."

"Reckon I will, too," remarked the other in a not very Christian spirit.

"I am feeling much better now, thank you, gentlemen," said Lord Frederick, "in fact, quite fit to meet you at oughts-and-crosses."

Paper and pen were produced, and in a few exciting moments the honour of Mungaroo had gained a point.

"I've lost to you fighting," said Villiers, "but I knew I'd win at oughts-and-crosses. What's next?"

"Poetry," said Jimmy. "We're pretty hot stuff on verse here, so ye'll need teh spread yehself."

"Who's your representative?" inquired Villiers. "Must be original, of course?"

"Yes," replied his host, "an' I'll represent us so there'll be no mistake."

"And how is the competition judged?"

"I'll judge!"

Rankin's composition was not very long; he finished first, and sat waiting for the other, showing no little impatience.

Presently Villiers finished. "Read yours first," ordered Rankin, and the stranger began:

There is a woman in the desert waste
  Who steals among the muffled moonless night
Toward your camp, and craves to be embraced—
  (Ho! Are ye proof 'gainst eyes mesmeric bright?)

The men were listening eagerly:

And when with her ye lie, her glitt'ring hair
  Enfolds your form like wicked tentacles
That suck your blood, and only leave Despair
  To fill your veins with little awful hells.

"Cripes!" said Rankin huskily, "it's a bit 'igh-falutin', but I trap 'is meaning. It's right—it's dead right. He means loneliness. How can a *munjong* like yew know *that?* Yeh got me banged—another point teh Mungaroo! Splinter, nail that up on the wall, an' learn it, too!"

So saying, he tore his own effort to fragments.

"Would a little gentle wrastlin' over-excite yeh, d'yeh think?" he added wistfully. "I hanker teh git inteh holts with a man that can do poetry like that."

"Oh, I feel quite fit again now, thanks; don't believe I'll have another heart-attack; anyhow, if I feel it coming on I'll say so. Would you mind wrestling as quickly as possible, so that I won't disappoint you as I did your boxing representative?"

In a second the two men were facing. The station-owner, seeing that Lord Frederick was not going to adopt the offensive, plunged to the attack.

Something happened—nobody exactly saw what, but the stranger had ducked quickly, and in a second Jimmy lay on his face while Villiers knelt beside, holding the toe of Jimmy's boot in his hand. The knee was bent, and whenever Lord Frederick pressed on the toe Jimmy shouted lustily.

The onlookers were disconcerted, unable to understand how one man could hold down Jimmy Rankin with one hand and make him shout.

"How's that?" asked Villiers.

"Yow! Let up—let up!" cried Jimmy.

"All right," smiled the other, slacking the pressure a little, "are you beat?"

"Yes—first fall teh yew!" agreed Jimmy.

"First fall, and all the rest," said Lord Frederick, renewing the screw again. "You see, I only wrestle straight on till one can't come up to scratch; either you are beat now or I'll break your leg—there's no best out of three here. You made the fighting rules, I make the wrestling ones. That's fair, isn't it?"

"Yow! Let up—I'm beat!" shouted Jimmy, and Lord Frederick arose and helped up his opponent, whose leg was numbed with the pressure.

Singing went against him, but the recitation of "How the Fire-Queen Crossed the Swamp" placed Villiers once again in the lead, gaining special applause from the teamster.

The Splinter represented Dingo Creek at "chalking" out in the moonlight, and that supple youth won on points after a well-contested match, and again proved too much for the visitor in doing a series of contortions with a couple of bush-made chairs.

Lord Frederick, having landed on his head several times in attempting the performance, suddenly seized a chair in each hand and sprang clean over the newly-erected, high stub-fence which inclosed what aspired to be the garden.

Landing lightly on the other side, he

turned and flung the two chairs back. "I want to get some sleep," he said in a rather defiant tone. "If you need any exercise during the night you can practise *that!* Anyone trying?"

But there were no offers. All hands approached to inspect the panel where he had jumped.

"Five foot in his spurs," said Hacky Anderson, "*an'* a cha'r in each hand!"

Jimmy thought a moment, then:

"We'll give yeh jump tehmorrah," he said. "I've a nigger here can wallop yeh."

II.

Dawn was breaking when Jimmy stealthily approached the sleeper with a bucket; halting two paces distant he flung the cold water over the recumbent figure.

But the sleeper lay still.

"Maybe that ain't good feh angina pec*tor*-is," he muttered with a sudden fear, but quickly regaining his composure, "Hi, young fellah!" he shouted, poking with his toe at the other's ribs. Then he swore heavily as he turned the wrapped-up log with his foot.

"Good morning, Mistah Wankin," said a cheery voice from behind, "horrible how some fellows lie in after Morning Star, isn't it?"

But Jimmy was not feeling amiable. He dropped the bucket, and, snorting, turned away.

They breakfasted with the lamp still lit, and the station rooster still crowing. Lord Frederick flinched violently every time this unfamiliar sound smote his ears.

"Reminds me of the Old Country," he said in a broken voice, with difficulty repressing a tear. "I had no idea Dingo Creek was so civilised as to keep fowls."

"We're colonised here all right," said Jimmy proudly, "We've got three hains an' that rooster, an' they're the only fowls this side o' Tuccawidgee. 'E's a reg'lar snorter that bird; hark at 'im hollerin' agen! Cocky's the pride o' this settlement."

The men emptied their pannikins, and left the table.

"About that high-jumping?" said Lord Frederick, turning to Rankin.

"Yarri!" roared Jimmy, and a big black came running. "You take on that white-felleh jumpin'?"

The dusky athlete grinned as he surveyed Lord Frederick; especially was his attention arrested by the latter's goggles.

"Yo!" he assented unhesitatingly.

"Mind," warned Rankin, smiling darkly, "s'posin' yeh nothin' win, then I wollop yeh!"

"Yo," agreed the black gaily, and putting his stock-saddle on his head, and holding it in place by the two flaps, he ran at the hitching-bar, and, with a tremendous effort, cleared it.

Now that hitching-bar, solid as it was, stood not more than four-feet-six in height, but with hands raised to steady thirty-odd pounds of saddlery on one's head, it is surprising what an effort it takes to clear such a leap.

Lord Frederick realised this, and refused point blank to attempt it, making the excuse that in ordinary high-jumping competitions one did not carry a saddle.

Billy turned away disgusted at so much protestation, and spat vehemently on the ground, but Jimmy was angry:

"Jump, yeh *munjong*," he roared, "or we'll sling yeh inteh the crick, an' dawg yeh off the run."

Poor Villiers looked round for a possible way of escape; on his right was the stock-yard, seven foot of rails; on his left a wire fence, top strand barbed, which inclosed a precious stack of curly-grass hay—this barrier was scarcely under five feet high. Before him stood Rankin and Yarri, formidable enough to bar any single man's advance; and behind, the rest of the hands.

The new chum capitulated.

"Give me the saddle," he said sulkily. "I'll have a try, but you're responsible if I'm hurt."

Placing the saddle upon his hat, he held the flaps, one on either side his head.

"Best take off yeh spurs, sonny," advised Rankin.

"Go to blazes!" observed the incensed guest, and before any one could prevent, he turned and raced for the wire fence. There was a wild rush to catch him, but he got there first. With a kangaroo-like bound, he stood off and rose at the cruel barbed fence, the saddle still resting on his head. One of his spurs clicked on the top wire, then, landing upon his feet, he turned and regarded them sympathetically.

"Ah, considerate of you, I'm sure," he said, "to run to catch me in case I should fall!"

He tossed the saddle to Yarri, and slipping back through the fence, he walked slowly towards the stockyard and prepared to saddle his own horse. He occupied himself with his horse-gear, apparently oblivious of everything else, though no one within a hundred yards could have been unaware of the following dialogue:

"Go on—jump it, yeh black devil!"

"Nothin' jumpit, boss—him too high enough!"

("THE OLYMPIAD OF DINGO CREEK" continued overleaf.)

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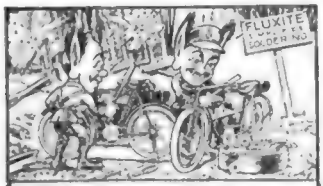

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THIS MONTH'S TOILET HINTS

SELECTED RECIPES FROM HERE AND THERE—THINGS EVERY WOMAN WANTS TO KNOW.

The Magnetism of Beautiful Hair.

"Applied Arts."

Beautiful hair adds immensely to the personal magnetism of both men and women. Actresses and smart women are ever on the look out for any harmless thing that will increase the natural beauty of their hair. The latest method is to use pure stallax as a shampoo on account of the peculiarly glossy, fluffy and wavy effect which it leaves. As stallax has never been used much for this purpose it comes to the chemist only in ¼ lb. sealed original packages, enough for twenty-five or thirty shampoos. A teaspoonful of the fragrant stallax granules, dissolved in a cup of hot water, is more than sufficient for each shampoo. It is very beneficial and stimulating to the hair, apart from its beautifying effect.

Permanently Removing Superfluous Hair.

"Toilet Gossip."

How to permanently, not merely temporarily, remove a downy growth of disfiguring superfluous hair, is what many women wish to know. It is a pity that it is not more generally known that pure powdered pheminol, obtainable from the chemists, may be used for this purpose. It is applied directly to the objectionable hair. The recommended treatment not only instantly removes the hair, leaving no trace, but is designed also to kill the roots completely.

Don't Have Grey Hair.

A simple, old-fashioned, home-made recipe will make the greyness disappear.

Grey hair is often a serious handicap to both men and women while still in the prime of life. Hair dyes are not advisable because they are always obvious, inconvenient, and often downright injurious. Few people know that a very simple formula, which is easily made up at home, will turn the hair back to a natural colour in a perfectly harmless manner. You have only to get two ounces of tammalite concentrate from your chemist and mix it with three ounces of bay rum to prove this. Apply this simple and harmless lotion for a few nights to the hair with a small sponge, and the greyness will gradually disappear. The lotion is neither sticky nor greasy, and has been proved over and over again for generations past by those in possession of the formula.

To Have Smooth, White Skin, Free From Blemish.

"Boudoir Gossip."

Does your skin chap or roughen easily, or become unduly red or blotchy? Let me tell you a quick and easy way to overcome the trouble and keep your complexion beautifully white, smooth, and soft. Just get some ordinary mercolised wax at the chemists and use a little before retiring as you would use cold cream. The wax, through some peculiar action, flecks off the rough discoloured or blemished skin. The worn-out cuticle comes off just like dandruff on a diseased scalp only in almost invisible particles. Mercolised wax simply hastens Nature's work, which is the rational and proper way to attain a perfect complexion, so much sought after, but very seldom seen. The process is perfectly simple and quite harmless.

Blackheads Fly Away.

Instantaneous remedy for blackheads, greasy skin, and large pores.

A practically instantaneous remedy for blackheads, greasy skins, and enlarged pores, recently discovered, is now coming into general use in the boudoir. It is very simple, harmless, and pleasant. Drop a stymol tablet, obtained at the chemists, in a tumblerful of hot water. After the effervescence has subsided bathe the face in the liquid, using a small sponge or soft cloth. In a few minutes dry the face and the offensive blackheads will come right off on the towel. Also the large oily pores immediately close up and efface themselves naturally. The greasiness disappears and the skin is left smooth, soft and cool. This simple treatment is then repeated a few times at intervals of four or five days to ensure the permanence of the result.

PARKER BELMONT'S CLYNOL BERRIES FOR OBESITY.—[Advt.]

"Jump, or I'll tear yeh blinkin' liver out!"

"Spos'n mine jumpit, them barb tear-it libber out anyways!"

"*Grrr!*"

And the visitor looked up at the sound of twanging wire, intermingled with a blood-curdling shriek and a heavy thud.

Yarri's right leg was caught above the ankle between the top and second wires which had twitched over—he was hanging there stunned (and it takes something to stun a native!), the saddle lying a good ten yards beyond. Disentangling their champion, they bore the limp body to a shed where he might lie out of the heat of the now risen sun.

Lord Frederick gave an affected little cough as the grim procession came past him.

"Look here, young felleh!" quoth Rankin, shaking a fist in his face, "yew ain't t'rough yet — yew'll cause bad blood yet between Dingo Crick an' Mungaroo before yeh done —but yeh've got teh ride a buckin' hoss before yeh leave this place."

"No, no," protested Villiers in dismay. "I don't mind a fair thing—I've owned myself beaten at nearly everything I've competed in. Mistah Weavah would never forgive me if I were injured through this foolishness and unable to give him the information he requires about the watahs."

"Now, then, don't yew try an' crayfish out of it like that," warned the other. "I say yeh got teh ride Willi-Willi, or take a fall for the fall yeh got my nigger jus' now. Thay's the hoss—that little bay felleh snortin' at yeh behind the rails there. He's quiet an' gentle teh catch an' saddle, but he'll sling yeh high as Gilroy's kite when yeh go teh git on. *I* can't ride 'im, nor any of the boys, so we can only wish yeh a pleasant voyage. He's jus' a buckin' machine, an' has never carried a man a hundred yards without emptyin' 'im off. Now yeh know all about 'im. Ride 'im, an' yeh got Dingo Crick dished."

"Well, *noblesse oblige!*" replied Lord Frederick, his blood feeling even bluer than usual. "At least you are candid about it. You don't spring him on me as a quiet horse, which I consider sportsmanlike in you. So for the honour of our station I shall have a try, and if I'm thrown, our prestige will not have suffered any more than that of Dingo Creek."

So saying, he set his saddle on the top-rail and dropped into the yard.

Willi-Willi (which, being interpreted, means cyclone) snorted at the stranger, but was not worse to gear than any fresh horse.

The new chum led him out through the gate. He shortened the near-side rein and took a firm twist on a lock of the mane.

"Sam's learnt him how to mount a hoss, anyways," murmured Bob, as he sat on the stockyard rails and watched Lord Frederick place his foot in the stirrup, bearing weight gradually upon it, and pressing his knee well into the horse, while standing exactly opposite to his shoulder. The right hand went to the pommel of the saddle firmly, and, with a clean, swift movement, the man cut his leg over the saddle, the foot going automatically to the stirrup.

Willi-Willi did not move.

"Reckon he's feelin' sorter low this mornin' an' don't feel like buckin'. Mind ef I stir 'im up a bit with me stockwhip?" insinuated Rankin kindly, and, without waiting for a reply, he flicked the thong snappily under the horse's flank.

Quick as light he bounded forward like a rubber ball, throwing down his head and shocking up the dust where his forefeet landed, then rebounding backward, and as instantly shooting up so that he stood on his hind legs almost perpendicular, towering and toppling, pawing into the air with his front feet.

How Lord Frederick had withstood the first movements none could say for sure—the Splinter's version possibly being the best solution of the mystery: "Reckon he hadn't time teh fall off."

But now all hands had an excellent view of him as he clung round the horse's neck, the rein, fortunately for him, slack—for the least weight on the horse's mouth must surely have brought him crashing over backwards.

Thus the horse balanced a good five seconds, then pirouetting quickly, he sprang again ere his forefeet touched the ground. Then he went at it like a whirlwind, spinning, reversing, rearing, flinging up his head from time to time, dropping one shoulder in a pretence that he was falling; in short, employing all the gyrations of the unconquered outlaw.

The rider flopped and swayed dangerously; sometimes he seemed saved only by the fortunate grip of a spur, which, however, only goaded the horse to further frenzy. There appeared no skill in the rider's methods — if methods there were — main strength and stupidity being apparently his sole assets, coupled with a most extraordinary amount of luck.

Now it happened that there was a new heifer being broken in to milk for the pride of Dingo Creek, and three perspiring natives had expended much energy in the cowyard

trying to get her into the bail. Having eventually triumphed over her, in spite of bellowing and much protest with hoof and horn, they had subtracted from her nearly half a pannikinful of the warm, frothy fluid, and then she was liberated, the gate thrown wide so that she might run out towards the other milkers which were still in sight.

Unluckily, at this moment the bucking horse plunged round the corner of the stock-yard and cannoned the infuriated heifer. A cloud of dust palled the next event, but as it passed, the watchers howled with delight as they saw the new chum had only quit the frying-pan for the fire.

Willi-Willi, the outlaw, lay struggling upon the ground, but the heifer was performing the two-step with Lord Frederick balanced on his stomach across her neck just behind the head; with her spiky horns she tried to stab him sideways as she plunged and capered.

The unhappy man felt for a hold, grabbed her lower jaw with his right hand, her off horn with his left, and, twisting her head suddenly, seized her lip in his teeth. The pain thus caused brought her to a standstill, and Villiers was seen to raise his hands aloft, holding only by his teeth. No doubt he was pierced through by one of those terrible sharp horns, and this was his agonised death-grip.

The stockriders like one man dashed out to the rescue, but ere they reached the fatal spot, the stranger's body gave a convulsive heave, and he and the cow went down together, the thin of her neck across his chest; but still his teeth kept their deadly hold, so the animal could not rise.

"I didn't want the darned fool killed!" panted Jimmy, as he arrived hot-foot, followed by the others.

But at that particular second Lord Frederick let go the lip, and, with a roar of rage, the heifer rose, the fallen man giving one quick, self-preserving roll and then lying still as death.

In another second there were eight men—five white and three black—sprinting for the rails, followed closely by a bovine fury.

Jimmy Rankin, having led the advance, was now in the rear of the retreat, and Lord Frederick, arising, raised his goggles a moment the better to see the greater part of his would-be rescuer's shirt ripped from his back as he reached the rails. Then warily avoiding the heifer's eye, he rejoined the party and remarked:

"I was so awfully excited I really didn't know what to do with the horrid beast, and when I opened my mouth to tell you I was all right, she got up again. I'm awfully sorry you lost your shirt, Mistah Wankin—look, there's a great red mark across your wibs, too—she very nearly caught you."

Rankin looked at him distrustingly, wondering how much of this sympathy was sincere, and the other stockmen's faces were studies in perplexity, for not one but had thought the new chum must be killed.

"Oh, I had forgotten all about the horse," Lord Frederick went on, "that was hardly a fair fall—what? I must have another go at the creature—I get so interested when I take up anything. Really, you've no idea!"

Willi-Willi, after his severe fall, had risen, and run back to the rails behind which were the other horses. The Splinter slipped down and opened the gate, letting the riderless horse pass to his mates.

Nothing daunted, though hot and dusty, the new chum, taking his stock-whip, descended once more into the yard, caught the horse, and went carefully though swiftly to the saddle. Again his steed remained stationary.

"Open the gate!" called Villiers, and the moment it was thrown wide, he sank the spurs so that the outlaw bounded among the other horses; in a flash one started for the open gate, another, and another. The Splinter was knocked down and hurled away as he attempted to stay the tide—the horses were all out and galloping, snorting, kicking, and racing tail-in-air, as such horses do when suddenly liberated.

Willi-Willi, seized by this infectious spirit of flight, abandoned his wicked intentions for the moment, and gave a couple of straightforward bounding bucks towards the gateway. Lord Frederick ducked quickly to avoid painting the cross-beam with his brains, and in a moment was bolting in pursuit.

There was a flutter and a screeching cackle as the frightened station fowls crossed his path. Out flashed the long kangaroo-hide thong, once the property of the lamented Seth O'Brien; there was a ringing report, a frantic squawk, and—but the stream of dust was too thick to see through properly.

The thunder of hoofs grew dimmer. "Squawk!" came down the breeze, and "Squawk!" a little less distinct. Then—only the sharp ear of the bushman could have detected it: "Squawk!"

The timber had received horses and horseman—only a curtain of dust hung dully in the air, gradually drifting, spreading, and thinning down-wind.

Rankin looked at Hacky Anderson. "What the——"

"Them horses has gone teh glory," said Hacky, "an' they's not one lef' teh muster 'em with. No good follerin' 'em afoot after

("THE OLYMPIAD OF DINGO CREEK" continued overleaf.)

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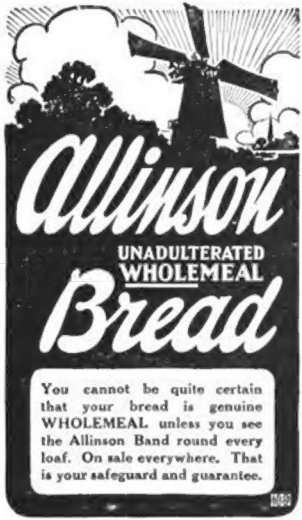

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that start; reckon we won't smell 'em agen till they come in teh drink at sundown."

"That *munjong*," quoth Billy, "will get any brains he happens teh possess belted out in the scrub; he'll not have a sportin' chance with Willi-Willi boltin' like that."

"The *munjong* be darned!" shouted Rankin. "Didn't you see what's wrong? Cocky's joined the party, got tangled in the fool's stock-whip. We've lost the finest an' only rooster within two hundred miles. I wouldn't have had that happen feh a paddock-ful o' dead *munjongs!*"

Towards evening there arrived at the homestead Jack Simmons and Charlie McLean coming in from "storm-hunting," and ahead of them they drove a mob of sober-looking and dry-sweat-coated horses.

Jimmy stared and swore.

"Where d'yeh git them hosses?"

"Out on that curly grass flat t'other side the opaline ridge," replied Jack.

"Seen nothing o' Willi-Willi anywheres about, I s'pose?" Jimmy inquired off-hand.

"Why, yes," said Jack, "we kem on that Mungaroo felleh yeh sold 'im to camped at the Twenty-Mile water-hole——"

"What!" howled Jimmy.

"That felleh from Mungaroo; 'e told us where he seen the hosses runnin'. Splinter was with 'im—'e told us how 'e'd had words with yew, an' quit after sewin' up Billy's face——"

"Me!" screamed Bill; "the blinded Splinter, sew *me* up?"

"Looks like it!" observed Jack, regarding the teamster's decorated eye. "'E wouldn't come back though we tried teh get 'im everyways; reckoned teh shoot 'isself if we put a hand on 'im—sent a pretty sossy message to 'is dad, too. 'E's jined t'other cove as 'is mate, an' seems reg'lar mesmerised to 'im—reckons 'im a plumb hero. They was havin' tucker when we come up, an' give us the two laigs of a real bully bird, sorter freak mallee-hen o' some kind as must hev strayed from its rightful district; darned good eatin', too—the cove reckoned 'e cot it with 'is stock-whip."

Jimmy Rankin was spluttering and dancing with rage.

"D'yeh know who that was?" he yelled.

Jack and Charlie looked up in surprise, and then at the rest of the men, who were all in various stages of collapse.

"That was Cocky—our own Cocky," roared Rankin. "The only rooster this side o' two hundred blinkin' miles away. An' yew've et 'im, yeh jumptup *munjongs!* Oh, ketch yeh hosses, boys, an' let's git after this sore-eyed, air-osticratic kidnappin' hoss-stealer with the jampuff pants—'e's bad's that piebald piper in the tale. 'E might's well took me complete outfit when he's at it. I'll fix yeh, Lord Which-One Whatshisname!"

"Lord Hellangone Hades!" cried Charlie McLean, slapping his thigh in sudden conviction. "I knoo I knowed 'im directly we rode up an' before 'e got out them goggles teh put onteh them laffin' blue eyes o' his. 'Is fancy clo's flummoxed me, too; an' I recollect that t'other lil YK7 hoss he 'ad with 'im—uster be a outlaw on Yackenbar—bad as Willi-Willi once, an' offered as a gift teh the man that could ride 'im; an' no one rode 'im only Seth O'Brien, 'is present owner that now has 'im."

"Holy snakes!" cried Jimmy Rankin, and for a moment all paused for breath. Then slowly a grin broke over his face.

"Well," he said, "Mungaroo has beat us this trip; Sam's got the laff on us, and Lord Freddy de Whatshisname is welcome teh Willi-Willi as fust prize, *an'* the blinkin' Splinter as mate feh 'consolation'; that boy'll head home to 'is ole dad when he's tired o' the wicked outside world; but," here he lowered his voice and frowned darkly, "I can't never fehgive yeh 'bout that rooster, Mister—Bloomin'—Seth—O'Brien!"

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"Tommy's" leisure is often of the spasmodic order, and that's why short stories and brief, breezy articles are the very thing for him. He will fight twice as well if he is in good spirits, so—well, it's up to you, isn't it?

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MR. EDITOR —HIS PAGE.

Glad Gossip Greedily Gulped.

SOMETHING EXTRA.

THERE is nothing mean about the ROYAL. We like to do the thing handsomely, don't you know; we hate the niggardly spirit as bitterly as some people hate work. Consequently, although the price has been driven up by the exigencies of war, we are doing our best to balance matters by giving more for the money.

Paper being scarce, additional pages cannot be added, so we are cramming more into each page—six lines of type more, to be exact—by curtailing the margins. This may sound a trifle to the superficial, but it makes a difference of four or five pages per number—practically an extra story.

That is a step in the right direction, is it not?

ABOUT THE SERVICES.

I like to reflect now and again, when I have leisure so to do, on the delightful number of friendships the ROYAL has made with men in the Navy and Army since war broke out. I don't refer only to subscribers, though these are undoubtedly the best friends we have, and may their shadows never grow less, but to people who have written to ask some question, or to submit a manuscript, or perhaps suggest an article.

The post-bag, you understand, is the pulse on which an Editor may keep his finger and so judge the condition of his public and prescribe accordingly. Letters to the Editor are like the spots on the face of a child by which we conclude it has contracted measles, or the radiant glow on the face of a damsel indicative of her superb health. I seem to have mixed my metaphors a little, but we live in a chaotic era. And the fact that most of the male portion of the Empire is in uniform adds importance to the views of Service correspondents, since they represent a majority.

All this being so, it brings peace to my grey hairs when I observe that we have the Navy and the Army with us. They write brief, bright letters to say so. This is not editorial flapdoodle, in which I never indulge, but cold truth. More than twenty-five per cent. of my daily post is soldier, and about ten per cent. sailor.

To me this is extremely gratifying. I will tell you why. The magazine a man takes the trouble to write to from the edge of blazes must appeal to him to a certain extent, or he wouldn't write; and since he does, I realise that I have not laboured altogether in vain since Europe caught fire. From the beginning I set out to amuse the people who were doing the work, and it is pleasant to feel I have succeeded to a certain extent. One likes to appeal to the best circles; in other words, His Majesty's Forces.

A BOOK ABOUT THE BRINY.

Of course you're keen on the Navy? Every true Britisher is, and most of us would give untold gold, did we possess it, to be allowed to view first hand the daily routine on a modern battleship. That is impossible, but if you really want to know what happens at sea, you should get a delightful book of naval stories and sketches entitled "Carry On!" by "Taffrail."

This book has just been published at the popular price of 1s. net by Messrs C. Arthur Pearson Ltd. It is not technical—the information is conveyed in a humorous and most attractive fashion; indeed a dip into its pages is almost as good as a trip on the ocean. Its heroes are real sailor men, intensely human and lovable. You'll like them all, and you'll revel in the vivid picture of their surroundings. Buy it, and bless me for telling you about it!

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